

HANDBOOK

NELSON GALLERY OF ART  
ATKINS MUSEUM

KANSAS CITY

VOLUME II





COVER DESIGN

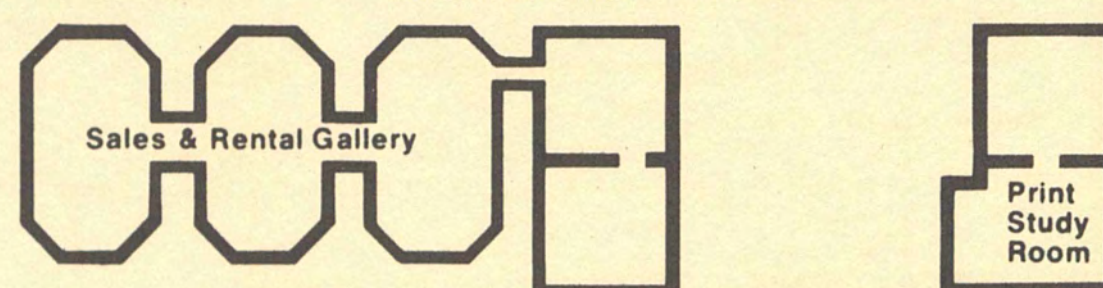
Detail from *Bamboo and Rocks*, by Wang Fu

See page 61

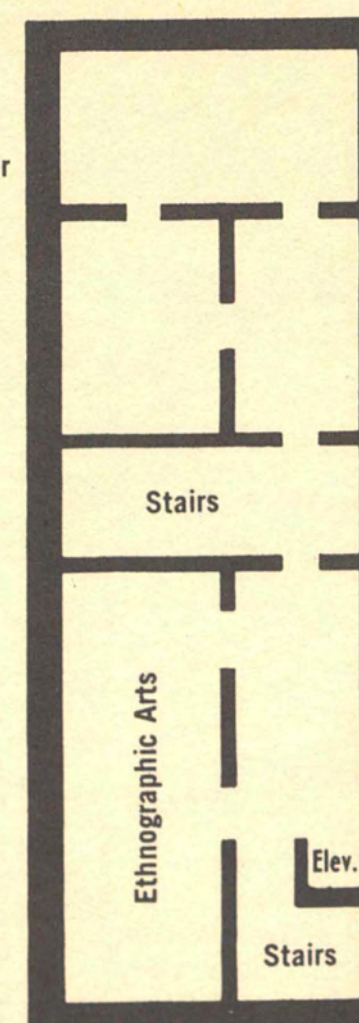
North Mezzanine over First Floor



South Mezzanine over First Floor



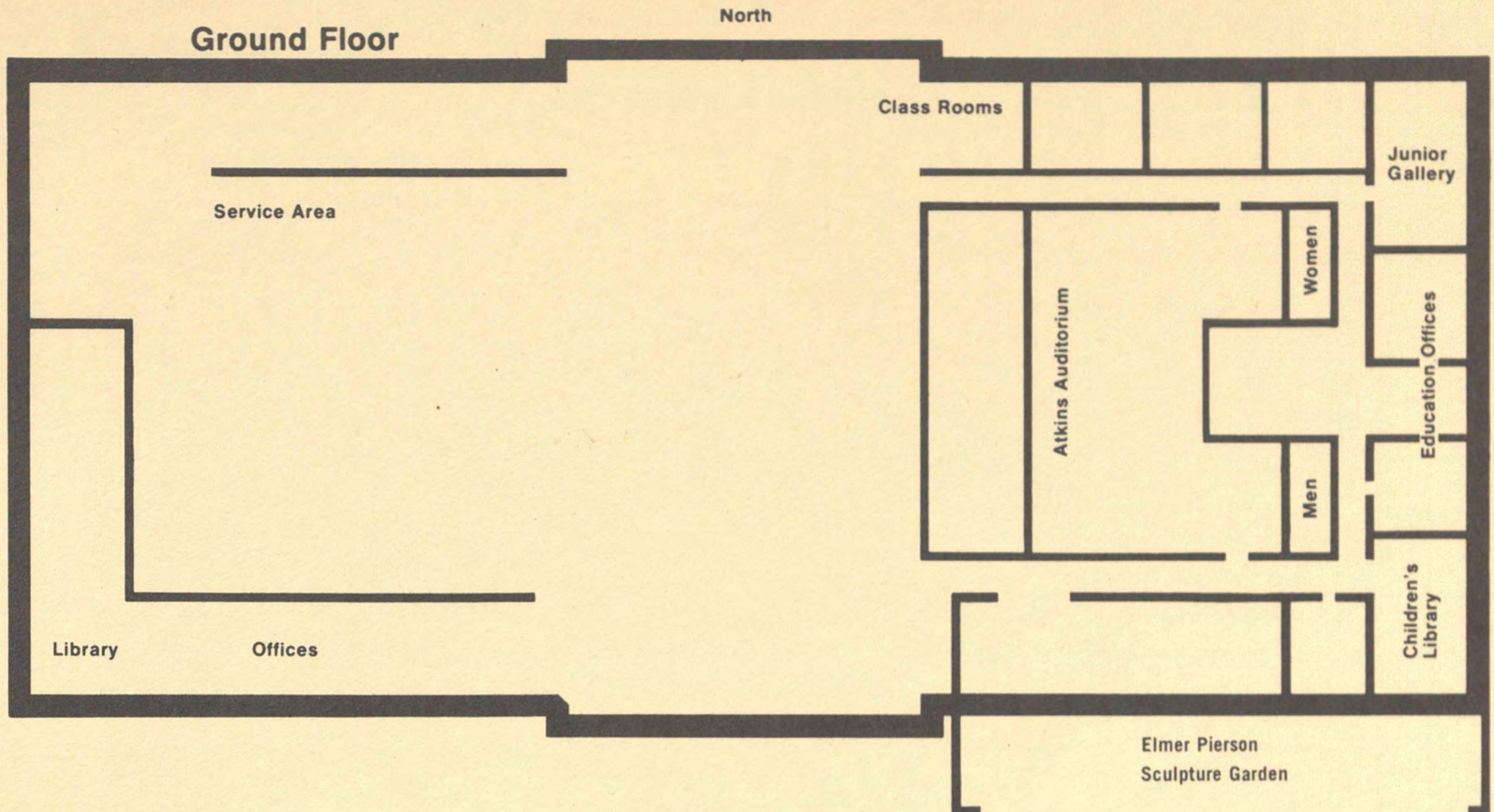
West Mezzanine over Second Floor



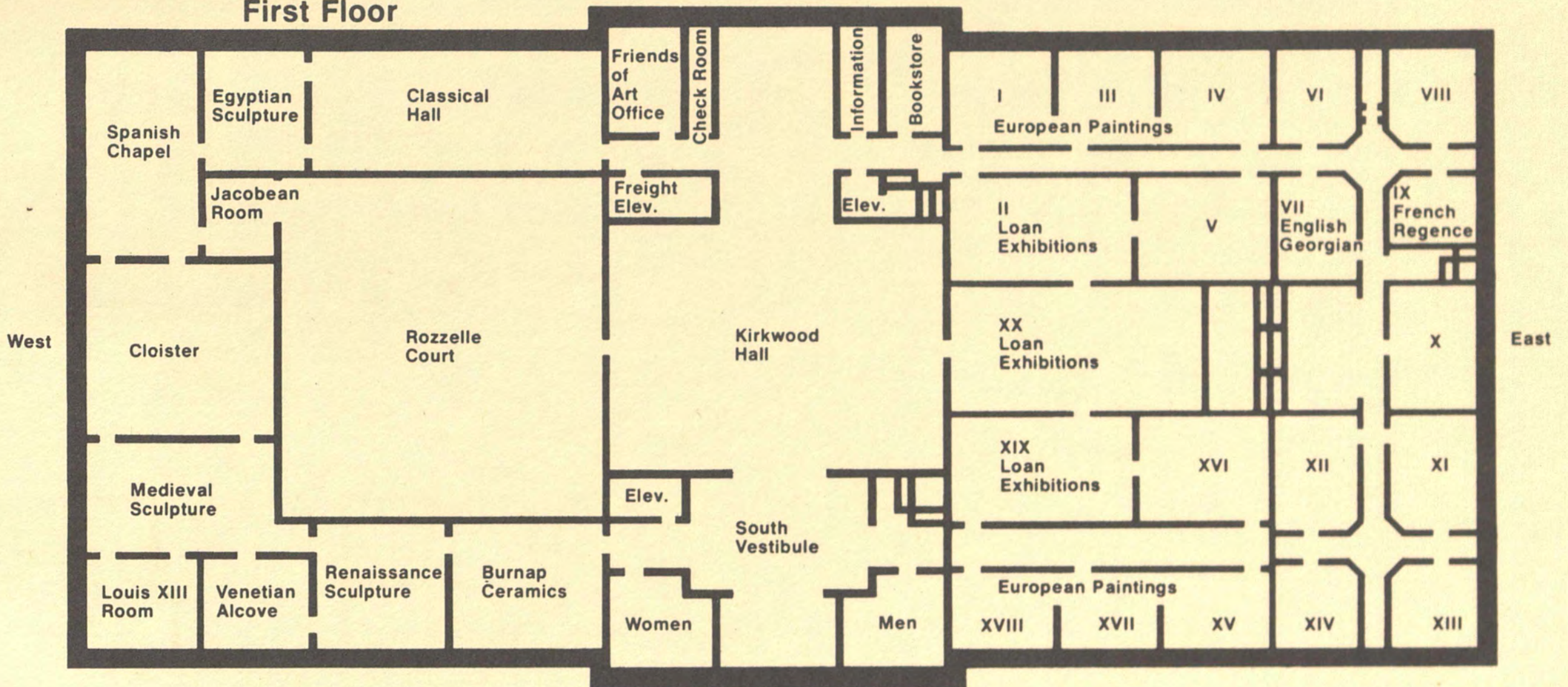


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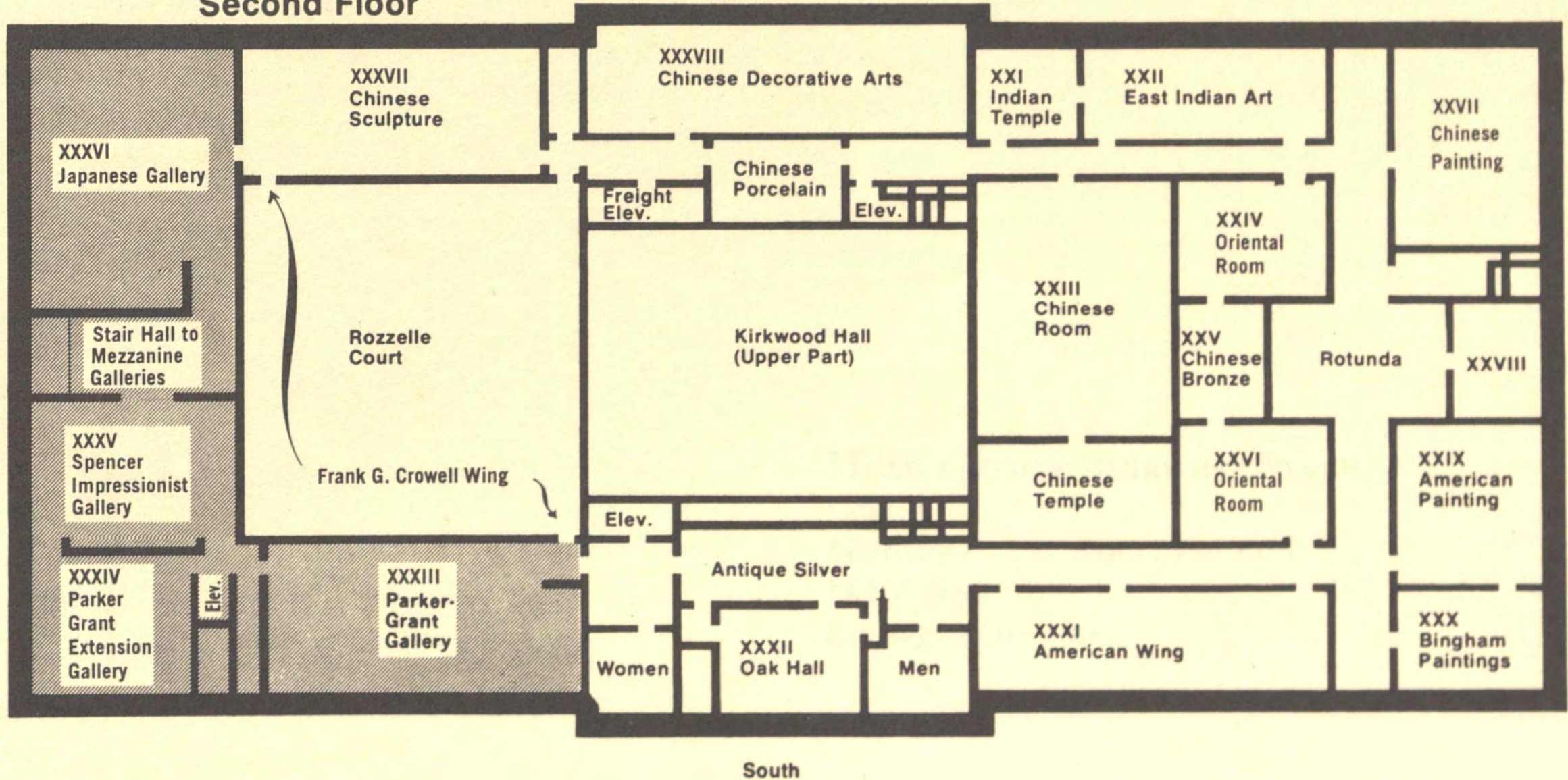
## Ground Floor



## First Floor



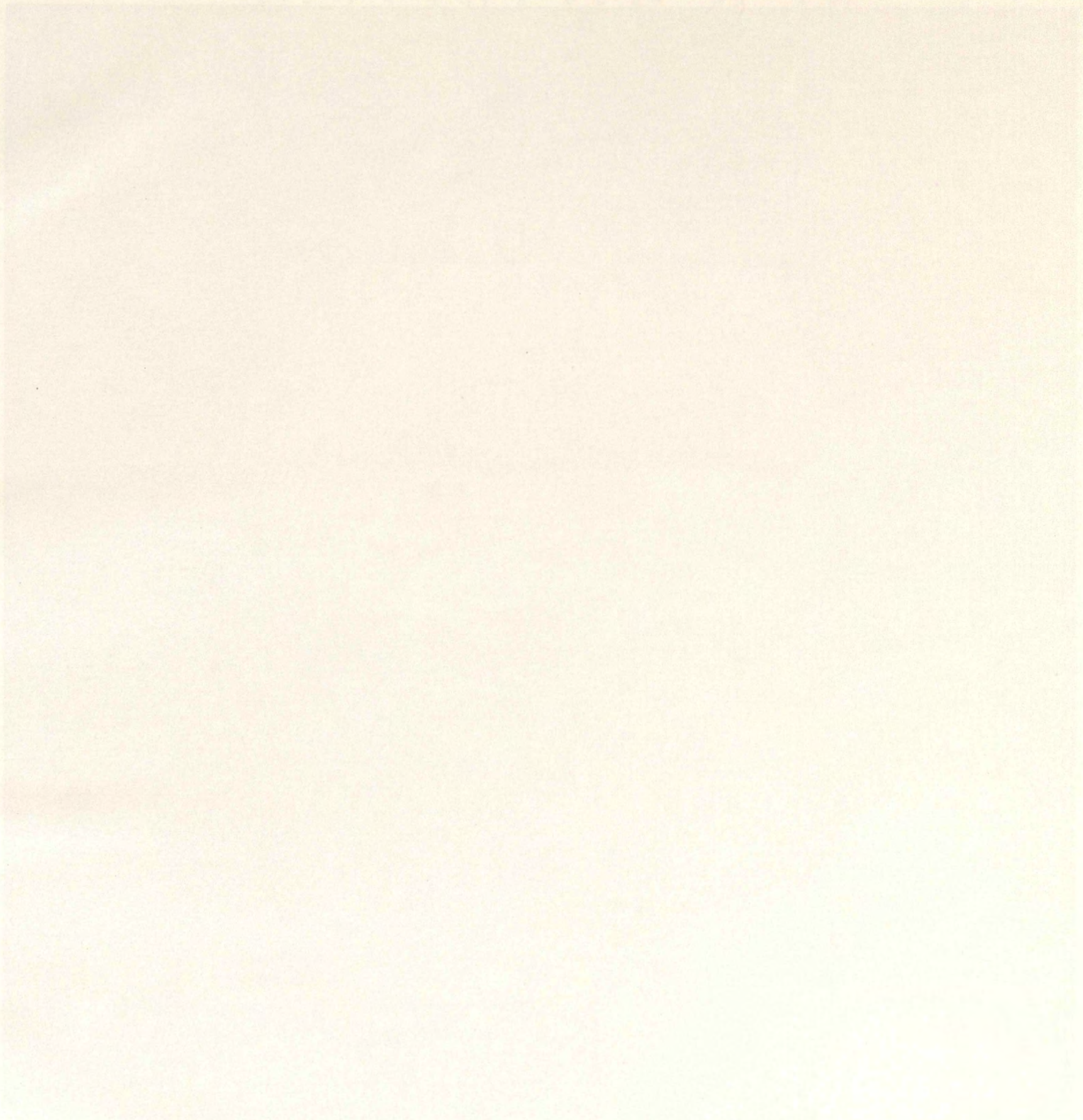
## Second Floor











HEAD FROM A BUDDHIST STELE

Chinese

Northern Ch'i Dynasty (550-577)

Dated 569

See page thirty-four







# HANDBOOK

of the

# COLLECTIONS

in the

WILLIAM ROCKHILL NELSON GALLERY OF ART

and

MARY ATKINS MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

Kansas City, Missouri

VOLUME II

ART OF THE ORIENT

Edited by ROSS E. TAGGART, GEORGE L. MCKENNA, and MARC F. WILSON

Fifth Edition

Kansas City, Missouri • 1973

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# Art of the Orient

## NELSON GALLERY—ATKINS MUSEUM

The extensive collections of Oriental art have been assembled with the aim of exhibiting in the Gallery artistic achievements of other cultures than our own. The objects presented here have been inspired by other concepts, answer other needs, and embody different solutions to the problems of aesthetic expression from those of the Western world, rooted in the traditions of Greece and Rome. The creative concept, cultural needs, and artistic solutions of Asia are no less valid than our own, and some familiarity with the arts of Asia will lead to a better understanding of the nature of man as well as to rewarding experience of visual delight.

The collections have been assembled since 1930, largely by purchase, but with a few notable gifts. They embrace in varying degrees, the arts of the Near East, those of Iran, India, Indonesia, Southeast Asia, China, Japan, and Korea.

The arts of Islamic countries, Iran, and those of the Near and Middle East are represented in ceramics, metal work, miniatures, and textiles. The pottery collection ranges from Neolithic times, through the decorated wares of the ninth and tenth centuries found at Nishapur, to the brilliantly glazed ceramics of Kashan and Rayy. Although the group of miniatures is not large, it contains a number of pages from famous manuscripts such as the *Materia Medica* of 1224 and two pages from the famous so-called Demotte *Sha-Namah* (p. 160). Pre-Islamic art from the Achaemenid and Sassanian Dynasties is included with that of the Ancient Near East and is described in Vol. I of this Handbook.

The sculpture of India, whether in bronze or stone, and whether inspired by the Buddhist, Hindu, or Jain religion, is one of man's supreme achievements. The collection contains excellent Buddhist and Hindu sculpture ranging from the second and third century through the classic Gupta period, best characterized by an heroic torso of the Buddha (p. 120), to the exuberant architectural adornments of medieval Hindu

temples. The collection is especially strong in South Indian Hindu bronze images, among them such celebrated and unique pieces as the Karaikkala-Ammaiyar (p. 140) and the Tree of Life (p. 141).

Indian religious art spread throughout neighboring countries, and the way in which it was modified to conform to different national concepts is well illustrated by sculpture from Java, Thailand, and Cambodia. The development of sculpture in the Khmer empire is demonstrated through images and bas-reliefs dating from the tenth through the thirteenth centuries. It is of interest that the first Oriental acquisition made by the Gallery was the beautiful Khmer head of a deity from the twelfth century (p. 147).

The Chinese collection is by far the largest among the arts of Asia. There are several reasons for this, one being that among the great civilizations of the world, China presents the longest unbroken tradition of cultural achievements. For example, the diversity and quantity of ceramics alone produced by Chinese potters from neolithic times to the present is without parallel. Moreover, only the incalculable productivity of Chinese artisans and artists over the centuries has made it possible for the Gallery to illustrate the panorama of a continuous cultural tradition from its inception through all aspects of its evolution up to the present day. The Chinese collection begins chronologically, then, with pottery and jade objects from Neolithic times and concludes with paintings of the twentieth century.

The bronze age is well represented, from about 1200 to 500 B. C., in a series of ceremonial bronze vessels, weapons, and chariot fittings, while the opulent art of the fifth to third centuries is best appreciated through a small but excellent group of carved jades that includes the celebrated jade *pi* (p. 23). The collection of Chinese sculpture is particularly noteworthy for two rare Buddhist stelae, a large bas-relief from the Lung-men caves, and such individual pieces as a marble lion from the seventh to eighth century



(p. 38). In the Chinese temple room is an unrivaled group of later Buddhist sculpture in wood, including the monumental and well-known image of Kuan-yin (p. 39).

The evolution and variety of ceramic objects made exclusively for burial in the tombs are fully represented from the early unglazed and painted pieces, such as the remarkable house model from the Han Dynasty, through the rich diversity appearing in the sixth century, to the large and brilliantly glazed horses, camels, guardians, and attendants of the eighth century, when this funerary art reached its apogee. In the art of the potter the Chinese have excelled all other peoples, and so great is the range and diversity that no collection can be definitive. Nevertheless, the visitor will find examples of most of the better-known wares and types over a span of some three thousand years—from the Shang Dynasty capital at Yin to the Peking palaces of the Manchu emperors.

The Gallery takes special pride in the collection of Chinese paintings, since it is among the best outside Asia. The long and involved history of Chinese painting is documented in the collection by works of great quality, many by the most celebrated artists of China. Probably the real glory of the collection derives from the group of early landscape paintings executed between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, including such masterworks as the towering mountain landscape attributed to Li Ch'eng and *Fishermen* by the eleventh century artist, Hsü Tao-ning (pp. 50-51). Traditional figure paintings may be seen in scrolls retaining the style of the eighth and ninth centuries and in its final but brilliant revival during the fourteenth century in the *Nine Horses* scroll of Jen Jen-fa (p. 59). The variety of styles that proliferated after the Sung Dynasty may be studied in numerous scrolls by well-known artists from the fourteenth to the eighteenth century. The entire collection can not be on exhibition at any one time, and so paintings are rotated throughout the year.

Classic Chinese domestic furniture, remarkable for its fine cabinetry and purity of design is, as yet, little known in the Occident. The Gallery collection is one of the most extensive and varied on public view

and, thanks to the generous gifts of Mrs. Kenneth A. Spencer, contains many unique pieces made from the fourteenth through the eighteenth centuries (pp. 94-95). There are additional parts of the collection not always on view but exhibited periodically which include a notably wide range of textiles and such specialties as first editions of seventeenth and eighteenth century color-block illustrated books.

The early art of Japan was predominantly in the service of the Buddhist church, and the oldest works in the collection are Buddhist images in wood from the ninth and tenth centuries. Japanese native genius rapidly transformed the Buddha image, as received from China and Korea, into its own aesthetic norm, as is evident in the serene beauty of the colossal Amida Buddha made of gilded wood in the twelfth to thirteenth century (p. 100). Among the small but representative group of Buddhist paintings, that of Benzai-ten, from about the same period, is the best known (p. 97). The kind of painting most truly Japanese in its breadth of draughtmanship and color harmonies, as well as its narrative content, called Yamato-e, is not, regrettably, represented in a complete horizontal handscroll; however, sections from such scrolls give more than a mere suggestion of this great style (p. 102).

The collection is probably strongest in the number and quality of folding paper screens, another art form that is a unique contribution of Japan. Paramount among the screens is the incomparable pair, *Pine and Plum by Moonlight* by Kaiho Yusho (pp. 106-107). The famous Uji Bridge composition may be seen in an excellent example from the Momoyama period, while a series of other screens illustrates the art through the Edo period and concludes with the elegant *Winter and Autumn* screens painted by Maruyama Okyo in 1782. Sotatsu's painting in ink of *Jittoku* and Sosetsu's chrysanthemums in full color show the breadth and versatility of the great artists of the Rimpa school. Both paintings are gifts of Mrs. George H. Bunting, Jr., whose generosity has done so much to enlarge the scope of Japanese art in the Gallery.

Japanese ceramics, including such subtle pottery favored for the tea-ceremony as



*Oribe* and *Shino* ware, and pieces decorated by Kenzan, are well represented, as are the blue-and-white and polychrome porcelains of *Imari*, *Kutani*, and *Nabashima*.

The over five hundred wood-block prints of the Edo period have been selected with such knowledge and discrimination, profiting by the kind advice of the late Louis Ledoux, that examples of all the famous masters of the Ukiyo-e school are to be found in color prints notable for their excellent condition, while a few are unique impressions. Selections from the collection

are shown periodically, but to ensure their conservation the Japanese prints are not on permanent exhibition.

As this Handbook goes to press, the display of Japanese art is confined to one gallery. Planned expansion in the west wing of the building will, in the near future, ensure far more adequate space and accommodate a larger proportion of the collection than is possible at present.

December 11, 1973

Laurence Sickman

## Dynastic China

Shang	1523(?) - 1027 B.C.	Sui	581-618
Capital at Yin (Anyang)	about 1300-1027 B.C.	T'ang	618-906
Western Chou	1027-771 B.C.	Five Dynasties	907-960
Eastern Chou	771-256 B.C.	Liao	907-1125
Western Han	206 B.C.-24 A.D.	Chin	1115-1234
Eastern Han	25-220	Northern Sung	960-1127
Three Kingdoms	220-280	Southern Sung	1127-1279
Western Chin	265-313	Yüan	1279-1368
Northern and Southern Dynasties	317-589	Ming	1368-1644
THE NORTHERN DYNASTIES		Ch'ing	1644-1911
Northern Wei	386-535		
Eastern Wei	534-550		
Western Wei	535-554		
Northern Ch'i	550-577		
Northern Chou	558-581		

## Historical Japan

Asuka	552-645	Muromachi	1392-1568
Hakuhō	645-710	Momoyama	1568-1614
Nara	710-794	Edo	1615-1867
Heian	794-1185	Restoration	1868-
Kamakura	1185-1392		



# Ancient Chinese Bronzes

Sometime around the middle of the second millennium B.C. the ancestors of the modern Chinese began to shift rapidly from a neolithic cultural level to a bronze age civilization. Advances in the sophistication of social organization were accompanied by elaboration of religious beliefs and ceremony, and astonishing technological progress. Social order was based upon clan, class, and function. The royal clan not only enjoyed political supremacy, but also a religious superiority which seems to have involved exclusive efficacy in sacrifice. The king maintained the ultimate connection with the cosmic powers through the medium of sacrifice to a supreme deity and the royal ancestors, who seem to have shared in some of these powers and had the ability to intercede with others. The practice of sacrifice to ancestors extended to other clans of less lofty status, as is suggested by the appearance of clan names cast into many Shang ritual bronzes.

The perfection and complexity of casting of these ritual vessels testify to the advanced technological level attained by the ancient Chinese. They are technically unequalled in the ancient world, which, together with their strength of artistic conception, places the Chinese artisan on a footing with those of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia. Evidence suggests that Chinese bronze-casting developed indigenously. While the ancient Near East used the lost-wax process, Chinese casters developed a system of complicated piece-molds prepared from refined whitish-buff clay. A vessel to be cast in this way is thought of in terms of sections dividing its circumference. Each mold section would bear the designs, negatively reversed, of perhaps a third, fourth, sixth, or eighth of the perimeter. The molds, all equal or varying in size according to the demands of shape, were then joined by mortises and tenons. Small bits of bronze, called chaplets, maintained the correct distance from the core to the mold. The precision of casting achieved may be appreciated by looking at the sharp, fine detail of the *décor* of the *chia* on page ten.

Exactly how the ritual vessels were used in the sacrifices mentioned above remains uncertain. Literature composed many centuries after the demise of the Shang indicates that most were used for preparing or holding sacrificial offerings of food. Each type of vessel was intended for a specific kind of food or drink. The classification of vessels by shape follows this functional division. Thus, the term *ting* denotes a tripod thought to have been used for heating sacrificial food for offerings and feasts.

The *décor* of ancient Chinese bronzes is essentially ornamental in terms of artistic conception. The most typical motif is called *t'ao-t'ieh*. It consists of zoomorphic facial elements—eyes, horns, ears, eyebrows, and jaws—disposed across the principal surfaces of the sides of the vessel as though an animal had been split lengthwise and the two halves laid out about a medial nasal ridge. Other motifs include circles, blades, whorls, and cicadas. Bird-like and bovine creatures may be seen, while headed zoomorphic creatures with gaping jaws and a long tail are usually called dragons. The meaning these motifs held for the Shang people has been lost. Analogy with other ancient cultures and the Shang concept of the interaction of all forces within an organic universe make it very unlikely that the *décor* on Shang ritual vessels

was mere decoration, devoid of religious meaning and potent magical efficacy.

The mature phases of Shang bronze casting are marked by clean, compact, architectonic shapes. The drawing of the motifs is crisp and tensile, with clear-cut but harmonious distinctions between different elements. Stylistic evolution tended toward axial symmetry in the disposition of *décor* friezes and toward clarification and emphasis of the principal elements of *décor* at the expense of the background. The background was often reduced to a field of "neutral" spirals, or in part left blank. With the passage of time, relief became higher as casting technique improved and as artistic sensibility became entranced with the possibilities of projections. In the late Shang and early Chou this culminated in a style devoted to aggressively projecting flanges, bars, and zoomorphic heads. Excellent but subdued examples of this style are the *fang-ting* of King Ch'eng and the *fang-i* on page thirteen.

During the second half of the tenth century B.C. ritual bronze vessels underwent a radical change. Bronzes of the ninth through seventh centuries B.C. are fundamentally at odds with the bronzes of the Shang Dynasty, and divorced stylistically at least from those of the early Chou. Instead of suggesting magical efficacy in a crucial sacrifice, they now often serve to commemorate the glory, and ego, of the person who had them made. Long inscriptions were frequently engraved in the bottom and lid, recounting personal honors, gifts from kings, or, even later, treaty agreements. This kind of vessel was made with an eye to history and the judgment of men. The *kuei* on page fourteen is a perfect example of the kind. It is also stylistically typical. Casting technique has declined markedly, and the repertory of motifs has been drastically reduced. Two bands of uninspired recumbent S-shapes with "eyes", rather sluggishly drawn, complement the squat, lumpen shape.

The art of bronze-casting witnessed a revival during the Eastern Chou period. Quality of casting was regained, and decoration was refreshed. Ornamentation in this period is basically an art of surface graphics that plays upon repetitive schemes tending to cover much of the vessel surface with intricate rhythms of line and light. The style is best represented in the Gallery's collections by the *ting* in Li-yu style (p. 15). On this vessel, ox-heads, alternately inverted, emerge at regular intervals from a matrix of interlaced bands whose surface is enlivened with canted meanders, striations, and concentric triangular meanders terminating in volutes. During the late Eastern Chou, the repertory of the bronze-caster expanded, taking in sculpture of animals and human subjects (p. 16). These were now cast three-dimensionally in a lost-wax technique imported from the West. The new directions of ornamentation inherent in the earlier styles of this period bore fruit in the brilliant combinations of linear and geometric patterns of inlaid gold and silver produced during the fifth through second centuries (p. 17). They are among the more satisfying decorative inventions ever produced in China.

With the Han Dynasty, bronze-casting ceased to be the prime, characteristic art of the age. Its products might still find service in temples, but inspiration rested solely upon the gratification of a taste for luxury.

MFW



Right

#### FRAGMENTS OF CARVED BONE SPATULAS

From An-yang

Shang Dynasty, Yin period

12th-11th century B.C.

Bone. 4"; 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (central); 4" high

35-79/1; 35-115/1 (central); 35-79/4

Carved bone spatulas bear the same zoomorphic and geometric motifs as appear on ritual bronze vessels.

Below—left

#### BOWL WITH IMPRESSED TEXTILE DECOR

From An-yang

Shang Dynasty, Yin period

About 1300-1027 B.C.

High-fired pottery. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ " diameter. 34-253

The paddle-and-anvil technique was used to shape this vessel. The body, which may be counted as stoneware, is thin, of grayish-buff color and is moderately coarse. A transparent, pale olive ash glaze, no doubt accidental, covers horizontal surfaces.

Below—right

#### Lei WITH T'ao-T'ieh DECOR

From An-yang

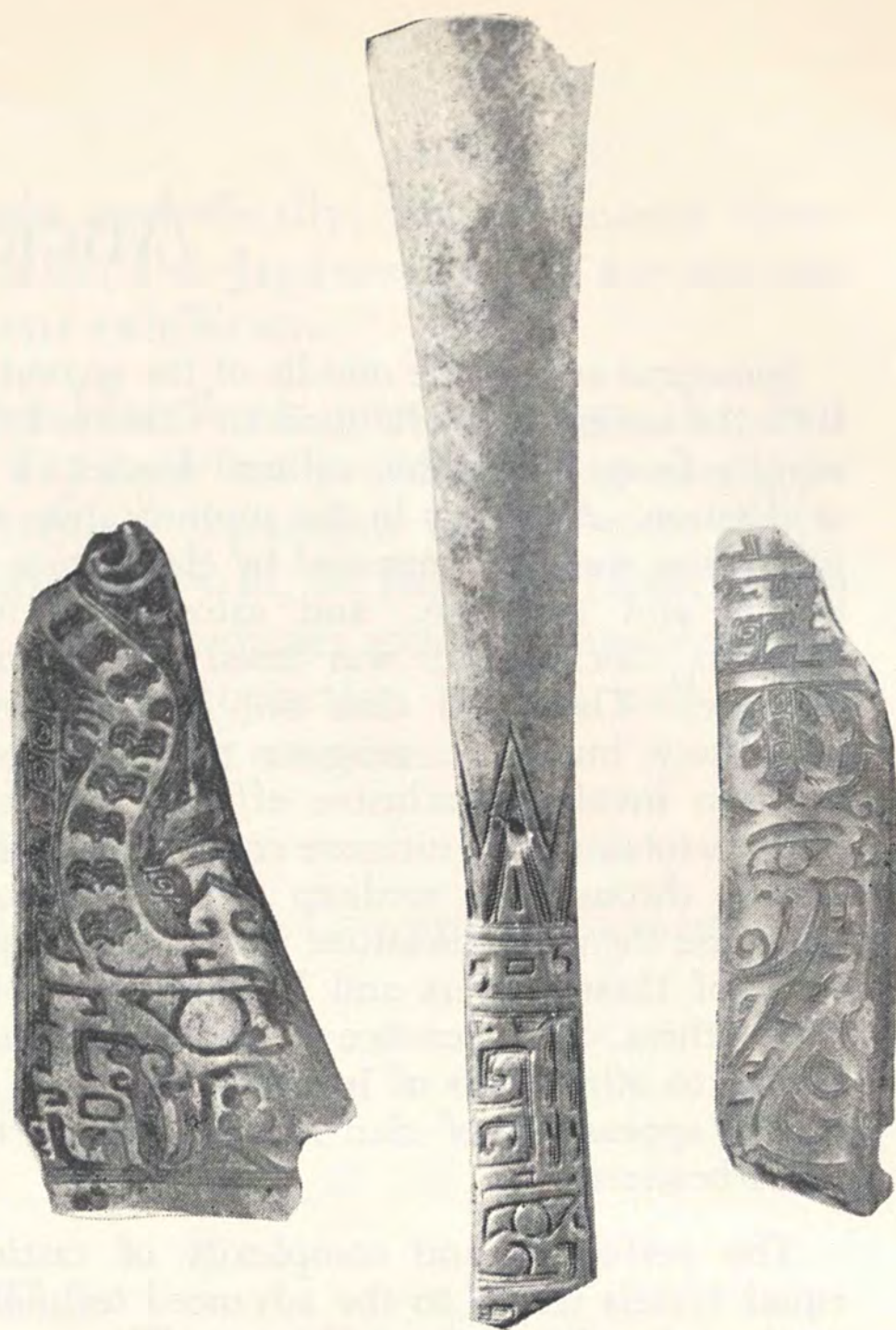
Shang Dynasty, Yin period

12th-11th century B.C.

White marble with traces of red pigment. 5 $\frac{5}{8}$ " high. 47-78

Gift of Dr. M. Piacentini

This *lei* is an approximation in white marble, much reduced in scale, of a shape more common to bronze, while the technique of decoration may be linked to that seen in Shang jades.



Left

#### DAGGER-AXE (Ko) WITH BIRD ORNAMENT

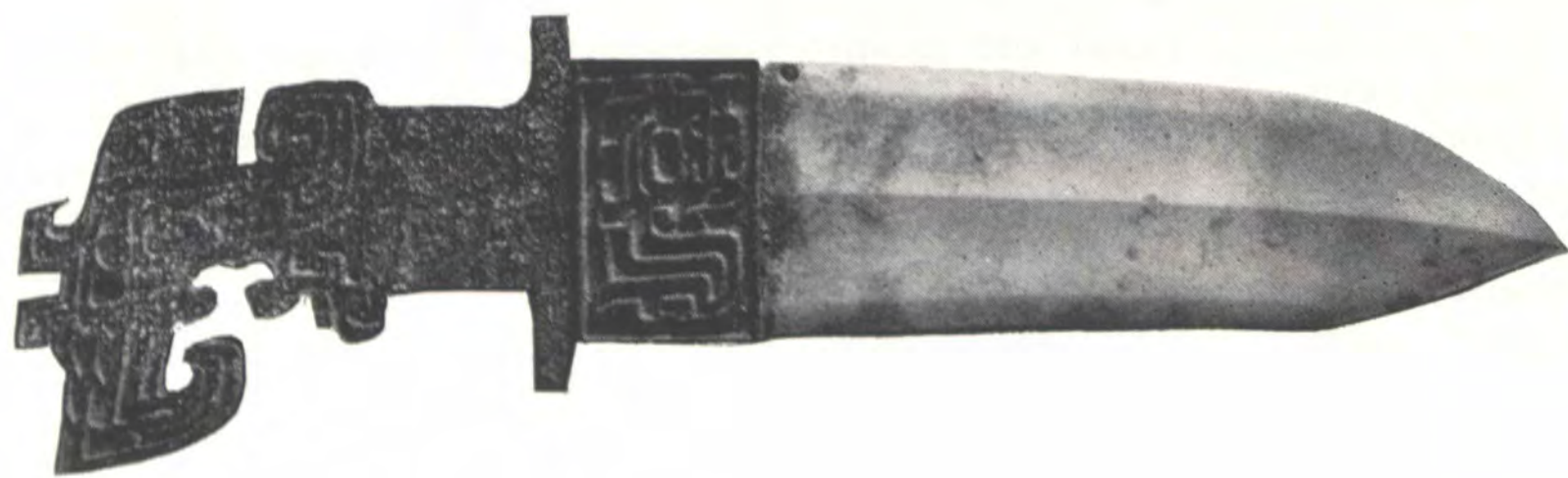
From An-yang

Shang Dynasty, Yin period

11th century B.C.

Bronze and jade. 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ " long. 35-78

The use of fragile jade for the blade suggests that this piece was made for ritual purposes only. The turquoise inlay of the bird ornament has been lost.







Left

RITUAL VESSEL, TYPE *Ting*

Shang Dynasty, Yin period

13th-12th century B.C. Inscribed

Bronze. 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ " high, 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ " diameter. 33-1467

Round-bodied tripods are among the most common and characteristic of Shang ritual vessels. The straightforward, compact shape, the symmetrical arrangement of the decor into axially coordinated friezes, the "tight skin" of the surface, and the balance between the clearly articulated *t'ao-t'ieh* mask and the hooked meanders of the background place this vessel at a mature stage of development between earlier phases of experimentation and later phases of elaboration.

Below—left

RITUAL VESSEL, TYPE *Hu*

Shang Dynasty, Yin period

12th century B.C.

Bronze. 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high. 52-20

Gift of Mr. John S. Thacher in memory of Mr. Charles B. Hoyt

Although of about the same date as the tripod on this page, this thinly cast vessel retains clearer connections to Shang ceramic traditions. Decoration is subordinated to shape and observes the surface, while the frieze of interlocked "T's" with fillers of squared meanders finds parallels in Shang white pottery. The profile masks of the upper frieze are not common to vessels of this type.



Below—right

RITUAL VESSEL, TYPE *Fang-Ting*

From An-yang

Shang Dynasty, Yin period

11th century B.C. Inscribed

Bronze. 7 $\frac{3}{8}$ " high, 6" wide. 35-73

This rectangular vessel is a mature example of a type which seems not to have appeared until the middle phases of An-yang bronze casting. The *t'ao-t'ieh* mask has now been clarified and stressed, while the medial and corner flanges begin to obey purely artistic urges outside the requirements of function.







Detail

Above

### RITUAL VESSEL, TYPE *Chia*

Shang Dynasty, Yin period

12th-11th century B.C. Inscribed

Bronze. 20" high. 58-9

This vessel represents a distinct type within An-yang bronze casting, signalled by elegant proportions, unparalleled precision of casting, and a treatment of the motifs which dismembers them into the most prominent and indicative components, such as ears, horns, jaws, and the like. Spirals covering the motifs blend with those of the background, minimizing the differentiation between motif and ground. Three-legged round *chia* disappear after the Shang dynasty.



Left

### RITUAL VESSEL, TYPE *Lei*

Shang Dynasty, Yin period

12th-11th century B.C. Inscribed

Bronze. 21" high. 54-26

The compact form, with its gently curving sides emphasized by slender, notched flanges, the three levels of low-relief in the symmetrically disposed design, and the zoomorphic heads in high relief are all characteristic of a mature Shang style. *Lei* of this kind, which are rare, usually bear a variety of motifs clearly articulated by relief and surface differentiation from the background. Pendant triangles alternating with plain ground and showing horned, ram-like zoomorphs fitted into the base angles are a distinctive trait.





Left

### RITUAL VESSEL, TYPE *Hu*

Shang Dynasty, Yin period

12th-11th century B.C.

Bronze. 16" high. 55-52

The element of design most frequently seen on Shang dynasty bronzes is an heraldic, animal-like mask, called *t'ao-t'ieh*, occupying prominent decor friezes on the vessel. The compelling forcefulness of the *t'ao-t'ieh* of this *hu* is due to its sheer massiveness, the large boss-like eyes, and concentration on the images of ferocity, such as claws and jaws. Some of these animal images may be identified: for example, the water-buffalo and ram appearing in high relief on the handles and on the neck of this vessel. There has been much speculation about the original meaning of these motifs, but their exact intent remains unknown. There can be no doubt, however, that they were thought to embody some magic power and were not meaningless decoration.

Right

### RITUAL VESSEL, TYPE *Chia*

From An-yang

Shang Dynasty, Yin period

12th-11th century B.C.

Bronze. 13½" high, 8½" wide. 34-66

Ritual vessels are classified according to shape and use, such as those for preparing and for holding food, those for containing wine, and those for drinking. There are about seventeen major classes, with considerable variety in each class. Although this vessel has four legs, is rectangular, and carries a lid surmounted by an animal in the full round, it is placed in the same general class as the round *chia* on the preceding page. The strongly modulated shape, enhanced by prominent flanges, and the relief casting of the *t'ao-t'ieh*, with its projecting ram's horns, indicate a mature phase in a sequence of these tetrapods.







Above—left

**RITUAL VESSEL, TYPE *Yu***

Shang Dynasty, Yin period

11th century B.C.

Bronze. 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". 47-73

Cylindrical *yu* of this type, with overall decoration in full Shang style, are among the rarest of all types, not numbering more than six. Exceptionally sharp and deep casting, sharp flanges gracefully peaked at their upper ends, a preference for strongly articulated horizontal divisions often marked by sharp ridges, domed lids with drum-like collars and elaborate knobs, and an uncommon attachment of the bail with trunnion and socket are among the distinguishing characteristics of the group.

Above—right

**RITUAL VESSEL, TYPE *Ku***

From An-yang

Shang Dynasty, Yin period

12-11th century B.C. Inscribed

Bronze. 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ " high. 34-244

The stylistic traits of this beaker, and of several others much like it suggests a "School", or perhaps even single workshop, of production during the later phases of bronze casting at Yin. A reserved elegance of proportion is common to the group, and the decor, particularly the *t'ao-t'ieh* mask, are "dissolved" into their most prominent components. Background and decor tend to merge in shifting plays of squared and rounded spirals.

Left

**RITUAL VESSEL, TYPE *Li-Ting***

From An-yang

Shang Dynasty, Yin period

11th century B.C.

Bronze. 8" high, 6" diameter. 35-250

The *li-ting* tripod is distinguished from the more common *ting* tripod in having the body sectioned into three distinct lobes, each centered over a leg. A kind of *t'ao-t'ieh* mask suggestive of a ram decorates late Shang *li-ting* tripods with a regularity that suggests a meaningful connection between it and the vessel type. The prominent, scored horns curling more at one end than the other, the blunt nose with hooked extremities, and the cusped ears are recurrent motifs identifying the "ram" image.







Above—left

RITUAL VESSEL, TYPE *Fang-I*

Early Western Chou

First half of 10th century B.C. Inscribed  
Bronze. 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ " high. 51-28

The prominent flanges, bulging mid-riff, and high, roof-like cover lend the vessel an architectonic authority. Treatment of the motifs in low relief as though flattish ribbon-like cut-outs and the "feathered-out" elaboration of their silhouettes with hooks, quills and curls are often found on vessels which may be associated with the Lo-yang region.

Above—right

RITUAL VESSEL, TYPE *Fang-Ting*

Early Western Chou

Last quarter of 11th century B.C. Inscribed  
Bronze. 11" high. 41-33

The terse inscription on the interior of the vessel indicates it was made either for or by King Ch'eng (reigned 1024-1004 B.C.), thus implying a date in the last quarter of the 11th century B.C. Although antecedents for the style of this vessel may be found in late Shang bronzes, the expression of the piece as a whole, with its aggressively projecting flanges, undercut and barbed, and its bristling spikes, bespeaks artistic impulses at odds with those of Shang productions.

Left

RITUAL VESSEL, TYPE *Tsun*

Shang Dynasty, late Yin period

11th century B.C. Inscribed  
Bronze. 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high. 50-67

The prominence of the flanges and the treatment of the horns of the *t'ao-t'ieh* masks in terms of a central "root" section with flat "feathered-out" comb prefigure a more heavy-handed style of early Chou. The flanges remain compact, however, and the articulation of shape is shared both by the body and the flanges, while the *t'ao-t'ieh* masks have not yet become willfully elaborated with an exuberance of hooks and quills.







Above

#### ZOOMORPHIC SPIRAL

Western Chou

Probably early 9th century B.C.

Bronze. 13½" high. 32-44

The massive, blocky modelling of the animal head, along with its heavy, curled snout, large pop-eyes, and long fangs, are typical of the middle and later phases of Western Chou style. The flat, strap-like zoomorphic heads with hooked volute bodies occupy a transitional position in a sequence which ends in "eyed" geometric "S" shapes. The spiral was made to be fitted to a pole, but its exact use is unknown.

Right

#### RITUAL VESSEL, TYPE *Kuei*

Late Western Chou

Late 9th century B.C. Inscribed

Bronze. 12" high, 15½" wide. 32-68/4

The interiors of the body and lid bear identical inscriptions which recount the details of a royal ceremony of appointment, thus offering valuable clues to the makeup of Chou court ritual. The heavy ring-foot on three legs, the squat, horizontally furrowed belly, and the style of the ornamental bands suggest a date in the late 9th century B.C., which would make the date in the inscriptions correspond to 825 B.C.



Above

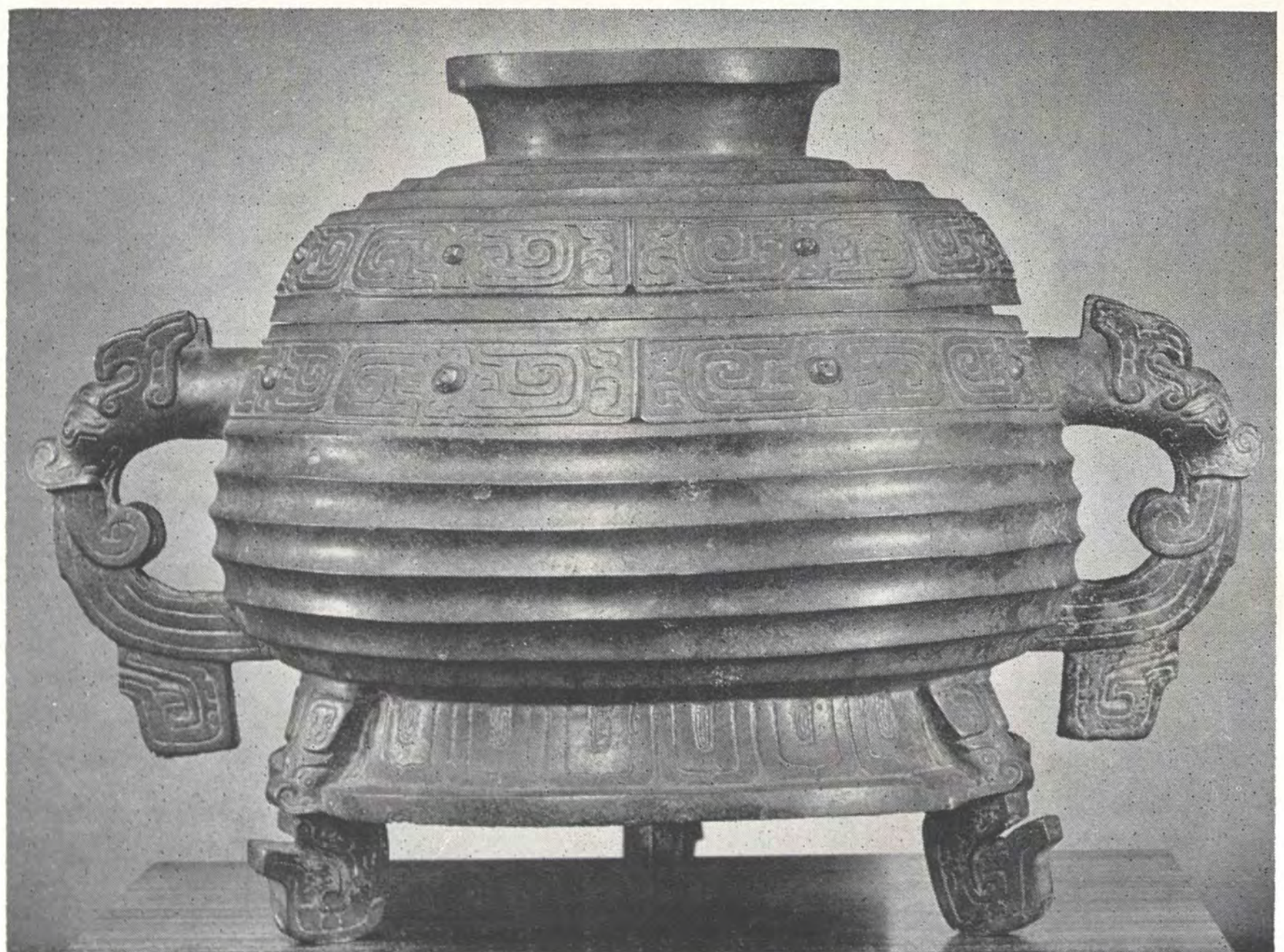
#### RITUAL VESSEL, TYPE *Li-Ting*

Early Eastern Chou

8th century B.C. Inscribed

Bronze. 5½" high, 7¼" diameter. 32-68/15

This vessel differs from the usual *li-ting* in not having the body pinched to form three lobes, but rather the stubby flaring legs flow integrally into the body, forming flattened arches from leg to leg. The date of the vessel may be safely established by comparison with a nearly identical vessel excavated at Shang-ts'un-ling from the cemetery of the ancient state of Kuo.







Left

COVERED CAULDRON, TYPE *Ting*

Eastern Chou

Late 6th century B.C.

Bronze. 11" high, 16" wide. 31-136/21

Below—left

BELL, TYPE *Chung*

Eastern Chou

5th century B.C.

Bronze. 22½" high. 41-34

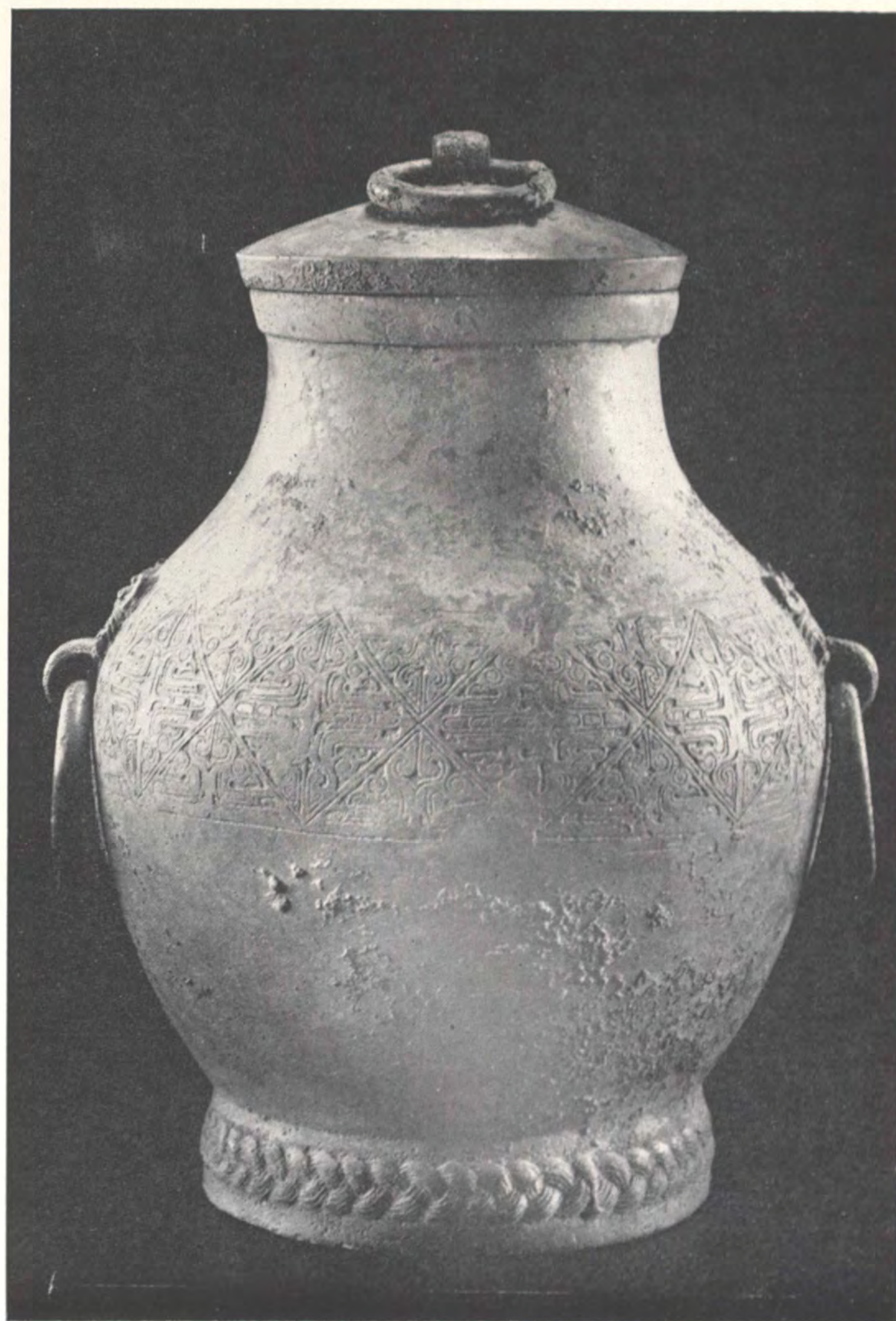
Below—right

COVERED JAR, TYPE *Hu*

Late Eastern Chou

4th-3rd century B.C. Inscribed

Bronze. 7¾" high. 47-20







Above

### PAIR OF HORSES

Late Eastern Chou

Probably 3rd century B.C.

Bronze. 81¼" and 77⅞" high. 32-185/7

As with many of the finest examples of Late Eastern Chou figural sculpture, animal or human, this pair of horses was reportedly unearthed at Chint's'un, once the seat of a minor principality. The alert naturalism of the heads and the attention to definition of muscles and contours, suggest a relatively late date, possibly the third century B.C.



Left

### KNEELING FIGURE

Late Eastern Chou

4th-3rd century B.C.

Bronze. 41¼" high. 32-185/2

This figure is of special interest because of the clear details of his dress—the decorated robe, the knife thrust into his belt at the back, and the curious fringed train. The purpose of the hollow tube held by the figure above a cylindrical socket is not known.





Above

# **PAIR OF TIGER HEADS**

Late Eastern Chou

5th-4th century B.C.

Bronze, inlaid with gold and silver.

21½" long. 32-66

A taste for opulence and powerful designs based upon tensile curves and strong, irregular geometric pattern marks Late Eastern Chou inlaid bronzes, most of which seem to have been fittings for chariots and weapons. The tightly sprung spirals and rhythms of the curvilinear drawing fully accord with pieces from Chin-ts'un, and suggest that these tiger heads might well come from the same site. The gold and silver inlay is made with fine wires of metal placed so closely to one another that they appear to be a solid sheet of foil.

Right

# **TABLE LEG IN ANIMAL FORM**

(one of a pair)

Late Eastern Chou

5th-4th century B.C.

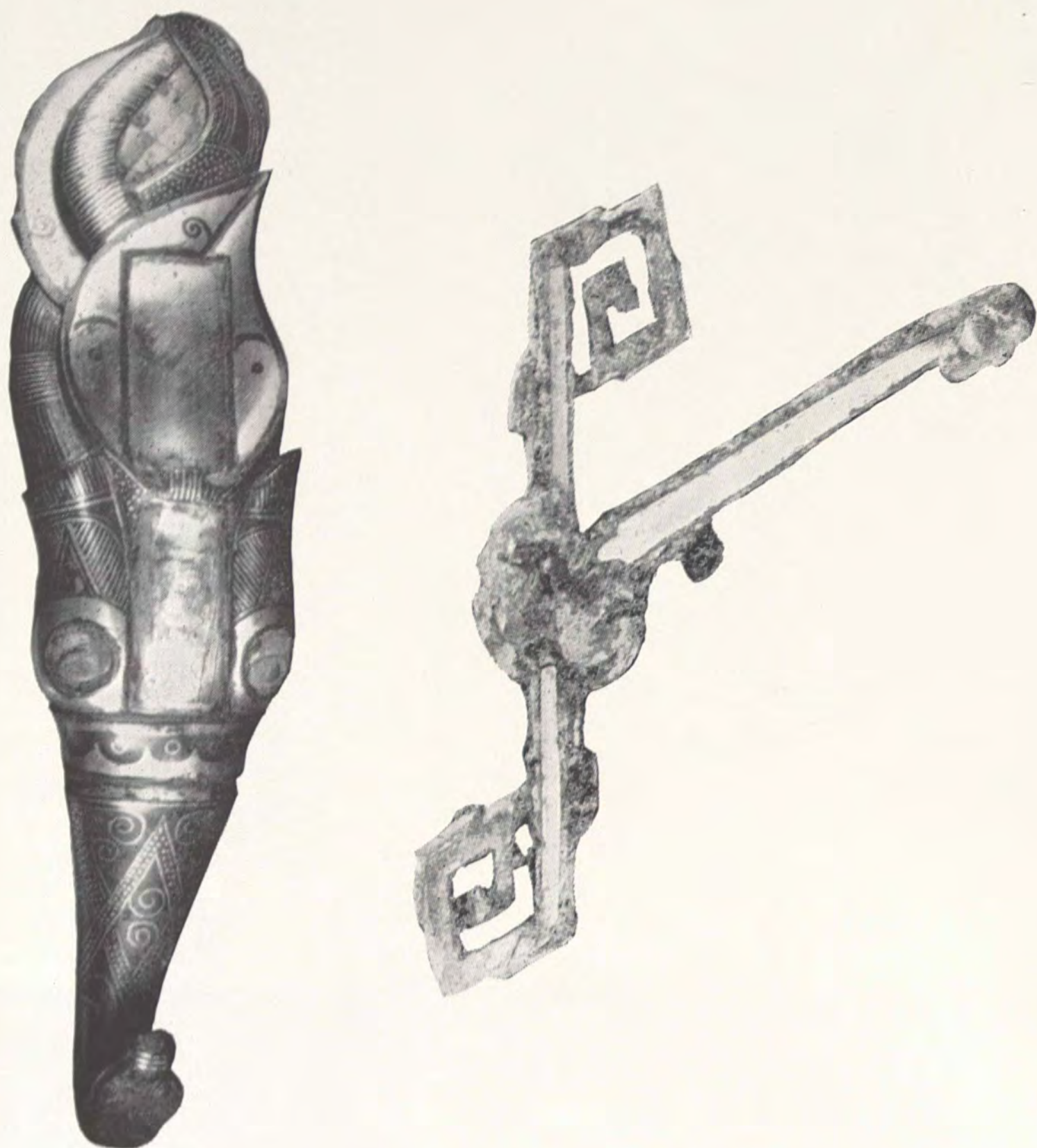
Bronze, inlaid with gold and silver

4¾" high. 31-137/30

The animal represented may be a bear. The Gallery has two of these bronzes from a set of four, reportedly recovered from the Chin-ts'un tombs. Ornamental inventiveness of the highest order here harmonizes with the firm, sculptural modelling of the figure. Spirals, whorls, triangles, and volutes are worked into patterns which not only decorate, but also enhance the articulation of the chest and shoulders, eyebrows and jaws, and such other parts as ears, forehead, and haunches.







Above—left

# **BELT-HOOK**

Late Eastern Chou

4th-3rd century B.C.

Bronze, inlaid with gold, silver, and malachite

5 7/8" long. 49-26

Gift of Mr. C. T. Loo

Above—right

# **BELT-HOOK**

Late Eastern Chou

Probably 3rd century B.C.

Bronze, inlaid with gold. 4" long overall. 47-76

Below—left

# **SQUARE MIRROR**

Eastern Chou

Probably 5th century B.C.

Bronze. 3 5/8" x 3 5/8". 36-76/2

The mirror is made of two parts, the face and the pierced back, joined together.

Below—right

# **MIRROR, *Shou-Hsien* TYPE**

Late Eastern Chou

Late 4th-3rd century B.C.

Bronze. 7 3/4" diameter. 47-45







Left

ORNAMENTAL CORNER BRACKET

Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-24 A.D.)

2nd century B.C.

Gilt bronze.  $4\frac{3}{4}$ " x  $5\frac{1}{4}$ ". 33-556

Below—left

LAMP IN THE FORM OF A RAM

Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-24 A.D.)

2nd-1st century B.C.

Bronze.  $3\frac{7}{8}$ " high,  $5\frac{5}{8}$ " long. 35-218

The ram's back is hinged behind the head to provide access to the hollow interior. Although some of the compactness of late Chou sculptural styles remains in this piece, and in the others on this page, the underlying ornamental urge of the earlier styles has given way to a softer, more relaxed modelling, now with feeling for and attention to naturalistic rendering. In Han art, animals and figures often share an engaging alertness, in which expressive characterization, often joyful or exuberant, is no longer imprisoned by ornamental formulae whose end lies in themselves.



Below—right

*Po-Shan* INCENSE BURNER

Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-24 A.D.)

Late 2nd century B.C.

Bronze.  $9\frac{1}{2}$ " high. 43-15

The name of this type of incense burner refers to the pierced conical cover made up of a composite of mountain peaks inhabited by animals and genii. It is usually taken to represent Mount P'eng-lai, the principal mountain in the Taoist paradise. Recent archaeological excavations at Man-ch'eng, Hopei, have turned up an incense burner with an identical stand of a human figure seated on a feline creature. The relaxed modelling and winsome expression of the figure and animal are significant of new directions taken by Han art.





## Jade

The working of "true" jade (nephrite) and its hard-stone substitutes has been pursued in China more zealously than in any other part of the world, so much so that it is nearly temporally congruent with Chinese civilization. From the earliest times a mystique has surrounded it. It has been thought to be a remedy for the sick and a purifying agent effective against poison and bodily decay. It was deemed appropriate for ritual paraphernalia throughout China's history, and, together with gold, was the pre-eminent material for opulent display of personal luxury and state pomp.

Being harder than any metal known to the ancient world, jade had to be ground, not carved. Tools used by the earliest Chinese jade workers included bamboo filament saws, blades, drills and possibly discs of bamboo, wood, bone and probably bronze. To these were applied abrasive compounds which did the actual cutting, fine quartz suspended in water or grease probably being used throughout the bronze age, followed chronologically by crushed garnet, corundum, and finally carborundum in modern times. Grooves made in this way vary from those having a broad, shallow profile with irregular sidewalls, as in the HUMAN MASK below, to lines of carefully controlled width and fluctuation, seen on the famous *pi* from Chin-ts'un. (p. 23).

Left

### DAGGER-AXE (*Ko*)

Shang Dynasty, Yin period

12th-11th century B.C.

Pale tan nephrite, calcified, with traces of cinnabar

17 $\frac{7}{8}$ " long, 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide. 49-25

The fragility of this beautifully proportioned blade suggests it was intended for ritual use only.

Above—right

### BIRD

Shang Dynasty, probably pre-Yin period  
(before 1300 B.C.)

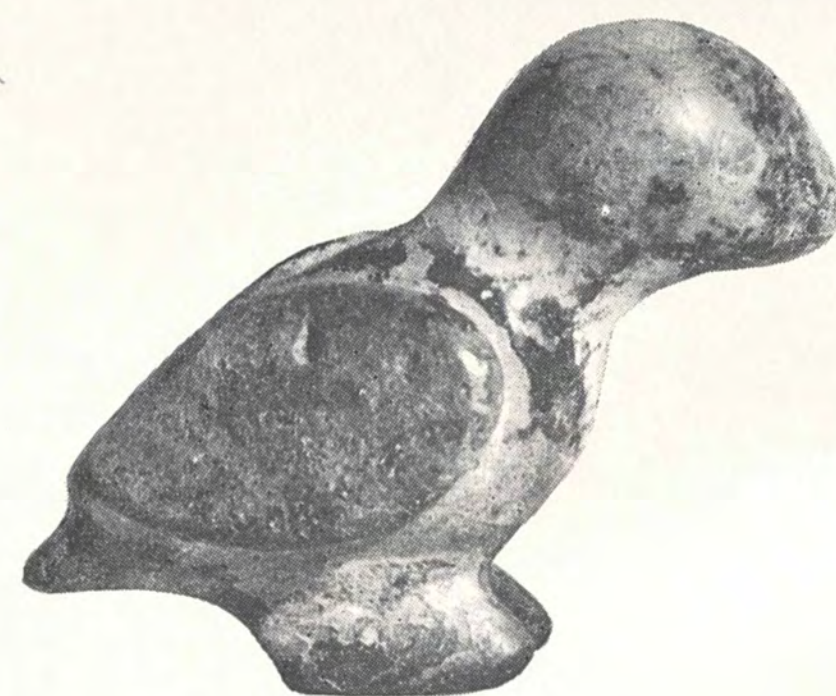
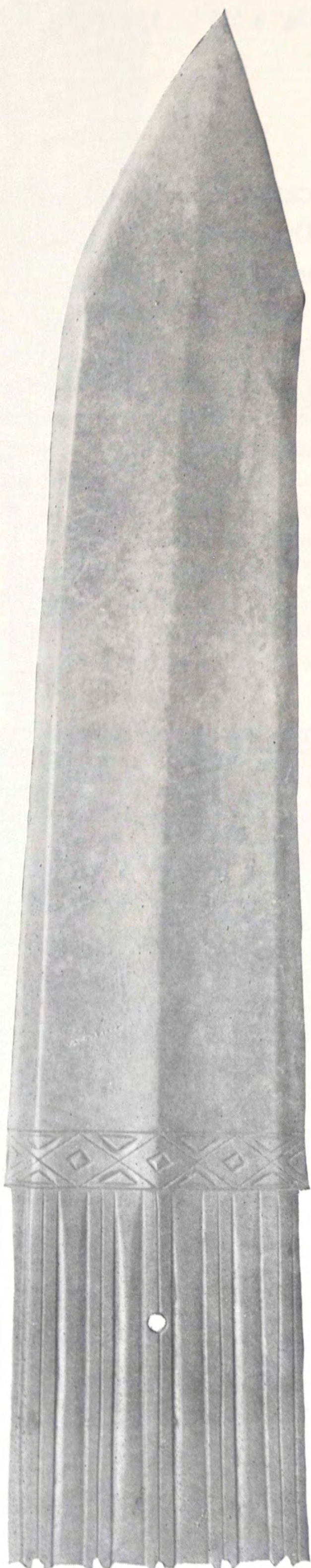
Mottled green nephrite. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". 35-89

Below—right

### HUMAN MASK

Shang Dynasty, Yin period (about 1300-1027 B.C.)

Nephrite. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high. 34-247







Above

### BIRD PLAQUE

Western Chou

Probably early 10th century B.C.

Pale greenish-yellow nephrite, partially calcified

6 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 2 $\frac{7}{8}$ ". 50-45

Close observation will reveal an owl-like bird to be the principal motif, which is found in the Shang period and, in diminishing number, during the early Western Chou period. Some of the decorative motifs, the complicated profile articulated by notched flanges and hooks, and the termination of incised curves in broad, flat circles suggest a date between Shang productions and later Western Chou pieces of the ninth century B.C.



Above—left

### CELT

Reportedly from An-yang

Shang Dynasty, Yin period

Probably 11th century B.C.

Greenish-yellow nephrite with tan striations

7 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". 47-18

The tip has been bevelled on both faces to form a sharp edge. Analogy with later pieces, such as the celt to the right, suggests that this too is a celt, not a handle.



Above—right and rubbing

### CELT

Western Chou

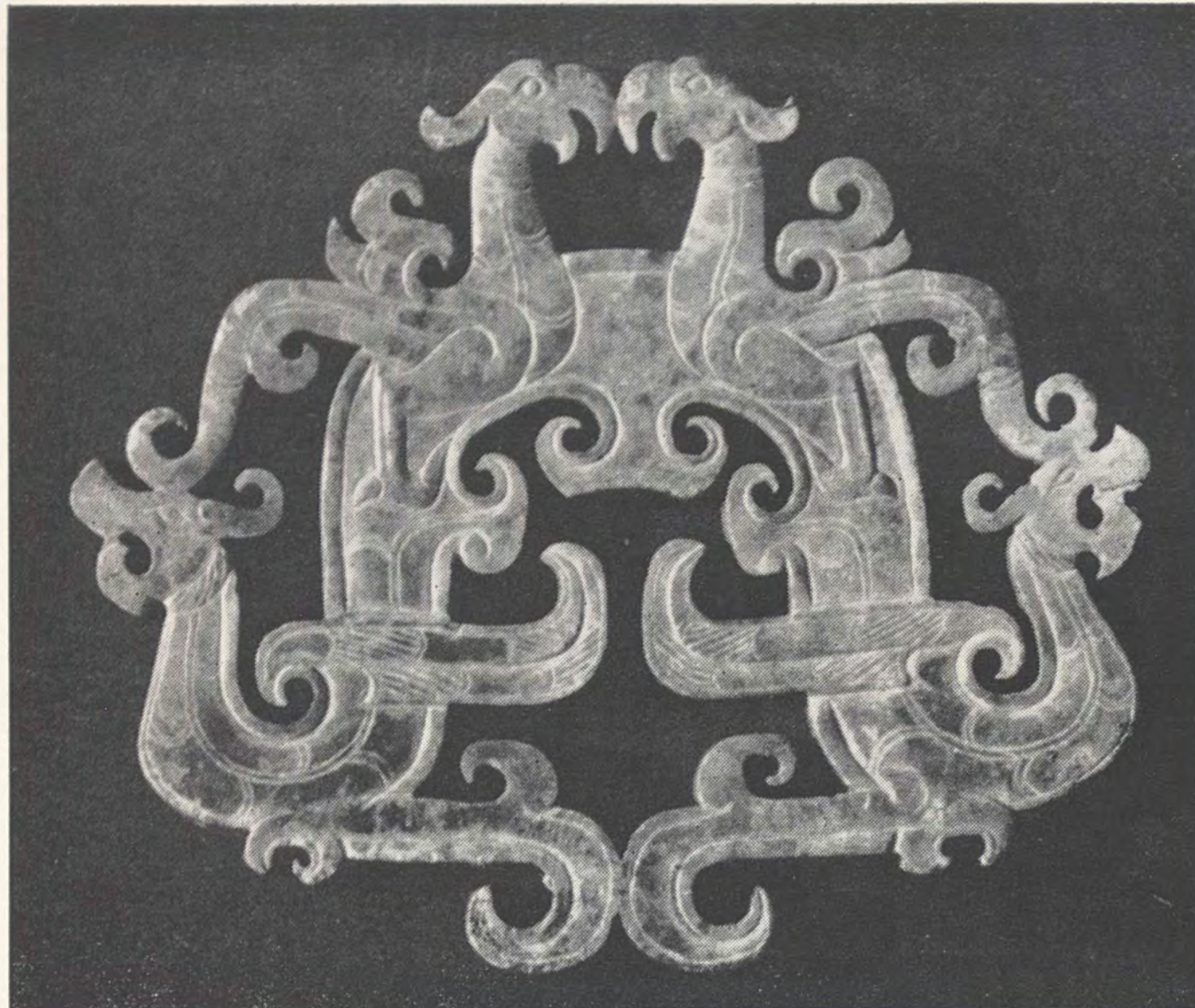
9th-8th century B.C.

Pale green nephrite. 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 1" x 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". 49-2

Gift of Mr. C. T. Loo

The two zoomorphs have each been divided into three sub-units, which tend to stand out as separate elements, linked more by common rhythms than explicit connections. The simplification of design, with a few strong lines and shapes predominating, and the decorative exploitation of broadly bevelling one shoulder of a groove, indicate a late Western Chou date.





Above—left

**RING WITH RAMPANT TIGER**

From Chin-ts'un

Eastern Chou

5th-3rd century B.C.

Pale greenish-yellow nephrite

2 1/8" diameter. 50-21

Above—right

**PENDANT**

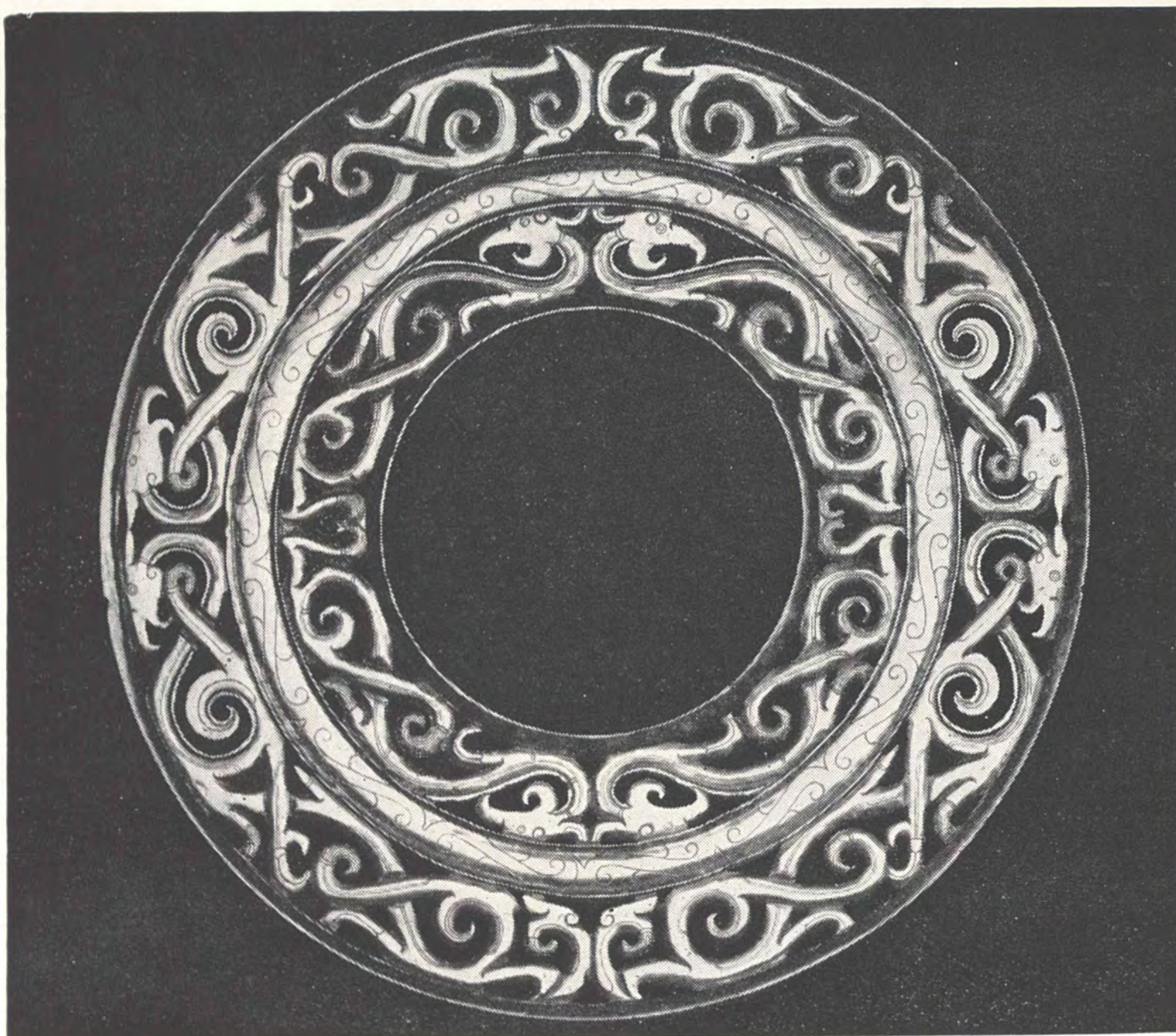
From Chin-ts'un

Eastern Chou

4th-3rd century B.C.

Translucent brown nephrite. 2 1/8" x 2 5/8". 35-88

A pair of confronted birds perches atop the backs of two addorsed dragons. This piece might well have been the center link of a larger, rather complex necklace.



Below—right

**RITUAL DISC (*Pi*)**

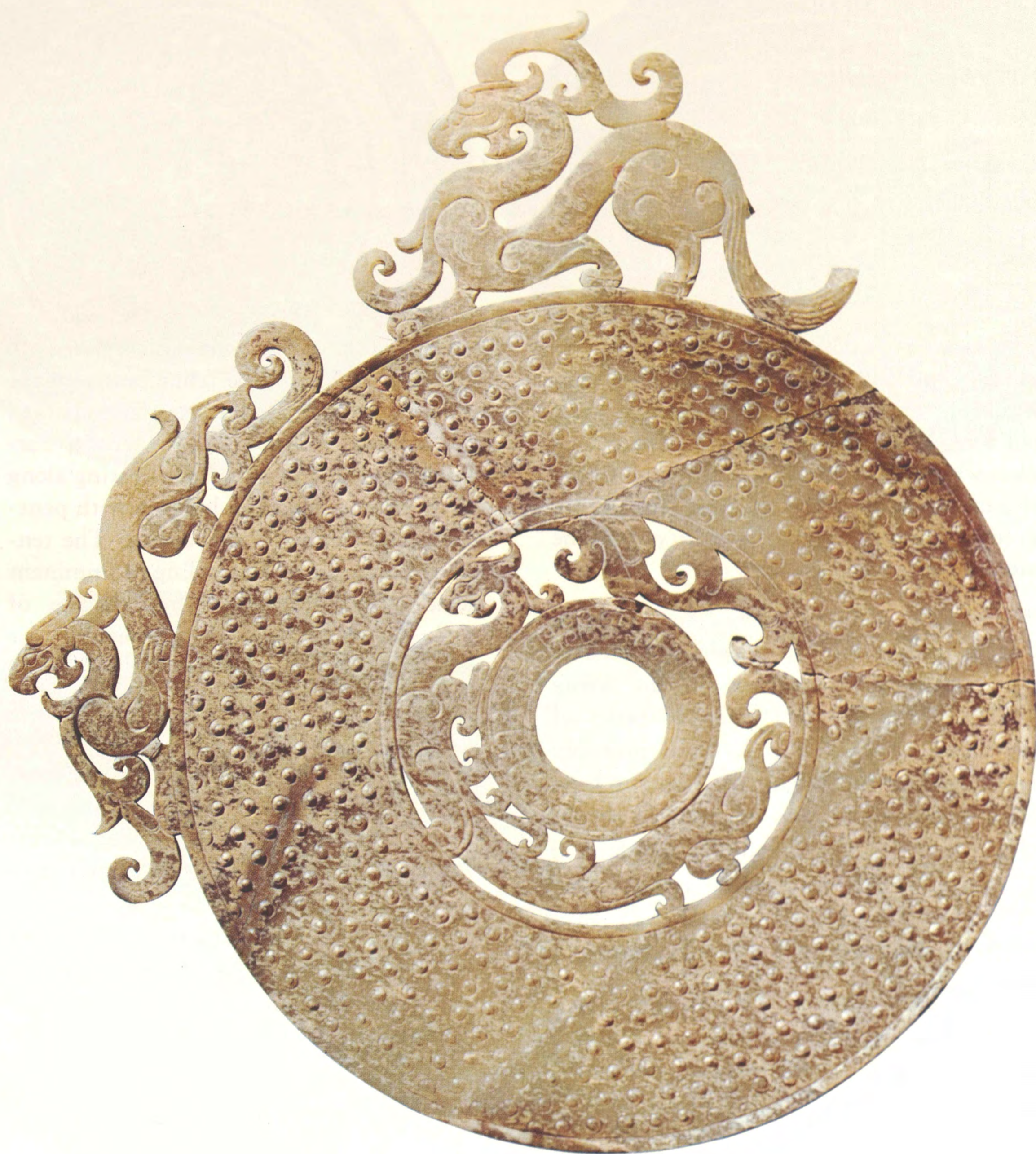
Late Eastern Chou

3rd century B.C.

Green nephrite. 6 1/2" diameter. 50-43

The three jades on this page offer a chance of seeing stylistic change in jade working from the fifth to third century B.C. The progression moves from the clear-cut, unencumbered profiles and pent-up, tensile curves of the RING WITH RAMPANT TIGER, through the arabesque elaboration of the PENDANT, to the rhythmically relaxed *Pi*, whose background has been completely cut away, leaving a complexity of serpentine forms curling back and forth against an openness that enhances the interaction of the silhouetted profiles.







## RITUAL DISC (PI)

From Chin-ts'un

Eastern Chou Dynasty (fifth to third century B.C.)

Pale greenish-yellow nephrite.  $6\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter,  $8\frac{5}{8}$ " greatest width. 33-81

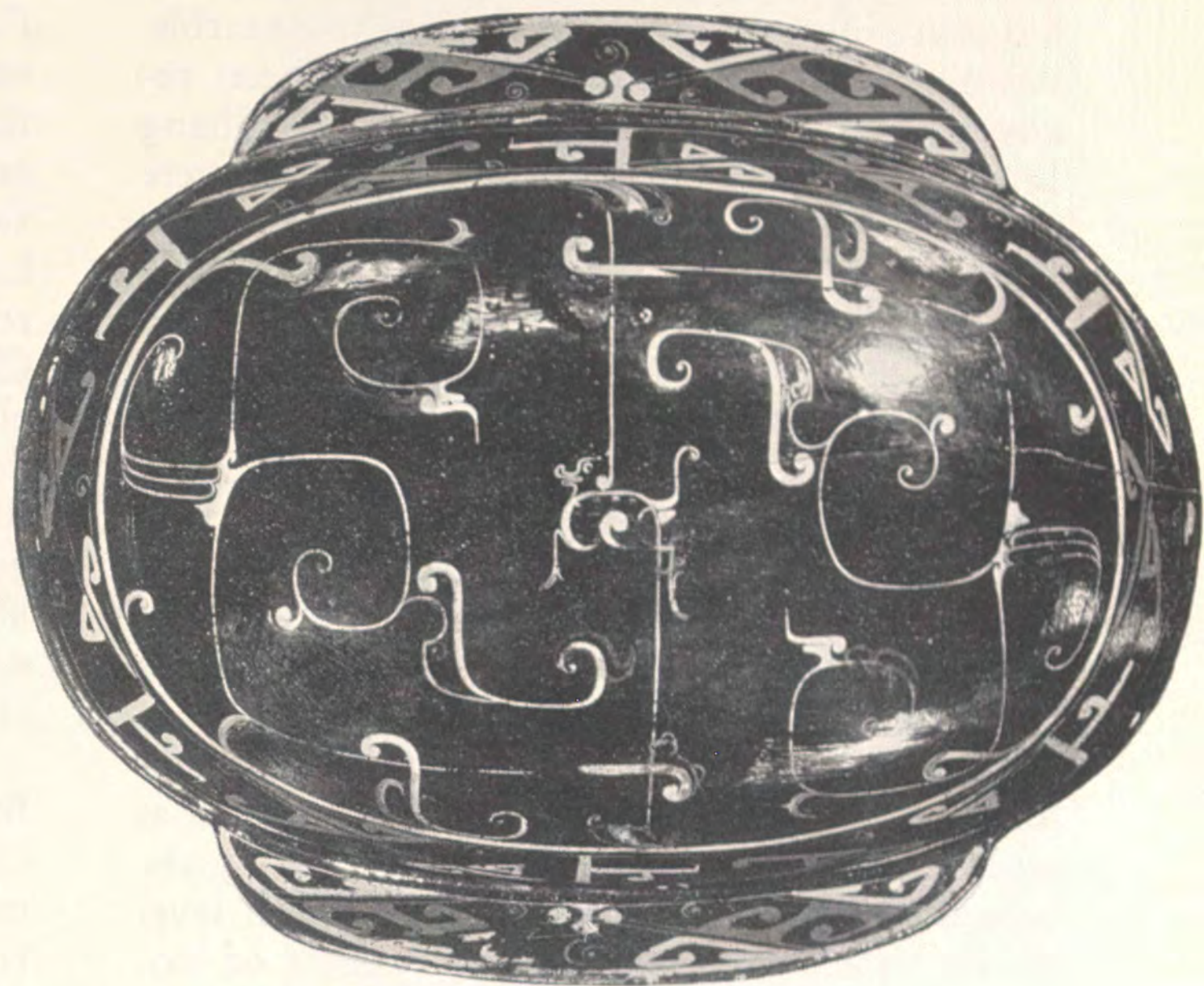
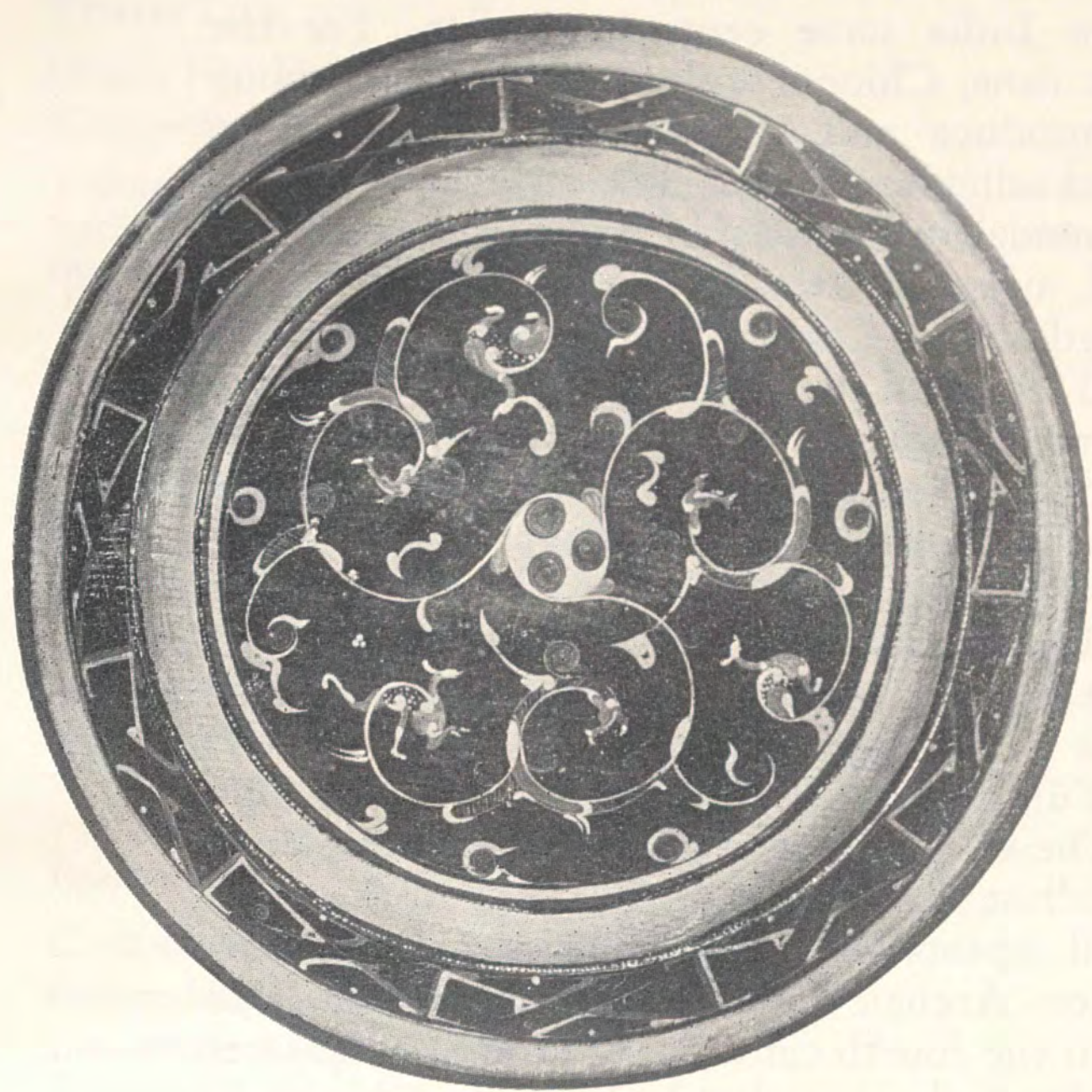
The jade ritual disc is one of the most peculiarly persistent of Chinese art forms. Neolithic graves some four thousand years old have yielded simple, unadorned examples, while in the twilight of Imperial China elegantly decorated ones were still being produced in prodigious quantity for the display of personal luxury.

The exact meaning attached to the ritual disc by the prehistoric people of China or by their dynastic successors of the Shang (1523-1028 B.C.) and early centuries of the Chou (1027-256 B.C.) will probably never be known. Whatever it might have been, and surely it once existed as a potent religious force, has here been subordinated to an urge toward ornamental art dedicated to the gratification of a taste for visual opulence cast in purely decorative terms.

At no other time in the history of jade manufacture have refinement of technical execution and perfection of decorative

instinct been so harmoniously joined to mutual advantage. The feline beasts on the perimeter and in the center are charged with a visual energy born of tensile, curvilinear rhythms, at times accelerating along tightly sprung bodies, or bulging with pent-up force in haunches and chests. The tension of drawing and the feeling of imminent release of energy, both characteristic of Chin-ts'un jades, are reinforced by the interior articulation of shoulders, chests, haunches, and legs with curves whose modulation of arc and whose incisions, bevelled crescent-like along one edge, draw the visual velocity of profile rhythms into dynamic concentration. Other features of earlier Chin-ts'un jades are to be found in the slightly convex modelling of the feline figures, in the relief spirals, and in the glassy but undulating surface polish which lends added vibrancy to the visual liveliness of the piece. The relief spirals have traditionally been termed "grain bumps."





Above—left

**ROUND BOX (detail of lid)**

From Ch'ang-sha

Early Western Han (206 B.C.-24 A.D.)

Early 2nd century B.C.

Polychrome lacquer on wood

8 1/4" diameter, 4 5/8" high. 48-36/2

Above—right

**CUP WITH "EAR" HANDLES**

From Ch'ang-sha

Early Western Han (206 B.C.-24 A.D.)

Early 2nd century B.C.

Polychrome lacquer on wood

6 3/4" long, 5 3/8" wide. 48-36/5



Left

**ROUND BOX WITH LID**

From Ch'ang-sha

Early Western Han (206 B.C.-24 A.D.)

Early 2nd century B.C.

Polychrome lacquer on wood, with gilt bronze mounts

8 1/8" diameter, 8 13/16" high. 48-36/1

Although lacquer was used as early as the end of the second millennium B.C., the first evidence of large-scale production of utensils comes from the flooded tombs of Ch'ang-sha, Hunan. From the fifth to first century B.C., Ch'ang-sha craftsmen produced technically perfect wares, decorated with lively combinations of eccentric geometric patterns and slender, arching curves, often springing from a zoomorphic matrix, enlivened by elastic curls, headed commas, and wing-shaped accents.



# Chinese Sculpture

In the centuries preceding the introduction of the Buddhist religion, with its demand for anthropomorphic images, the Chinese produced surprisingly little sculpture in stone. Scarcely a dozen figures sculptured from white marble, dating from about 1200 B.C., have been recovered from the royal tombs of the Shang Dynasty at Anyang. A majority of these were made for attachment to some kind of structure of perishable material. They include human forms, a tiger, owls, water buffalo, and fantastic zoomorphic creatures of the kind represented on bronze ritual vessels, and all partake of the same highly stylized and abstract character as the ornament on these bronzes. Throughout the centuries following the Shang Dynasty there appears to have been no stone sculpture at all until a thousand years later in the time of the Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-24 A.D.). If over this long period there was no sculpture in stone, as seems to be the case, sculpture executed by the bronze caster's technique reached a high level of sophistication in sacrificial vessels of zoomorphic form and such three-dimensional appurtenances to bronze vessels as dragons, birds, and atlantean figures.

All surviving stone sculpture from the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-220 A.D.) is associated with funerary monuments, guardian lions, and other beasts at the entrance to the tomb, sculptured pillars, and slabs carved in low relief for the walls of underground tomb chambers or of offering shrines above ground. One of the earliest pieces in the collection is such a slab ornamented with horsemen, dancing figures, and fantastic animals. (p. 27).

The large striding chimera, a kind of guardian called *pi-hsieh*, illustrated at the bottom of this page, although slightly later than the Han Dynasty, follows closely the Han tradition of animals designed to guard the approaches to a tomb. One of a pair, this beast derives much of its life animation and rhythmic, striding movement from the linear treatment of the legs and wing-like patterns on foreshoulder and flank.



The Buddhist religion did not become a decisive factor in the creative arts of China until the fourth century, although introduced from India some centuries earlier. For the first time, Chinese sculptors were called upon to produce cult images that conformed to fixed religious canons. The earliest were based on models ultimately of Indian origin, modified, often drastically, by the styles of the kingdoms of Central Asia situated along the road traveled by Buddhism from India to China. From the strong but often somewhat clumsy earliest attempts, a clearly Chinese style developed in the fifth century, which, though still archaic, was illuminated by the Chinese genius for abstract form and linear rhythms. The greatest monument of this first inspired style is the series of cave temples in the cliffs at Yün-kang, executed between 450 and 500.

The Gallery collection includes examples of Buddhist sculpture that illustrate all the principal aspects of changing styles over the centuries. Archaic Buddhist sculpture, dominant from the fourth century into the third quarter of the sixth, was already basically Chinese in character, although drawing elements from India, Gandhara, and Central Asia. It was schematic, patterned, and ornamental, largely linear in concept, with the drawing retaining tensions and rushing movement derived from Han Dynasty stylistic traditions. Technically it was limited to high and low relief with the figures presented frontally.

Beginning in the latter part of the sixth century, there came about a gradual and at first tentative evolution toward a more developed plastic volume, even in images done in high relief. Three-dimensional sculpture in the full round attained its apogee during the seventh and eighth centuries at the height of the T'ang Dynasty.

The last phase of creative significance came about during a long, slow, but persistent decline over the years from the tenth into the fourteenth century. The best surviving works are the sculptures in wood and clay, and a few gilt-bronzes, executed for the Buddhist temples of Shansi Province from the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries. The deities are far more humanized than formerly, relaxed in pose and eminently approachable, but notably lacking in deep spiritual force. The style is rich and ornate, with mannerisms and conventions derived from the calligraphic brushwork of Buddhist paintings.

LS

CHIMERA (one of a pair)

3rd to 4th century

Stone. 4' 3½" x 5' 9". 44-26/1



Above—right

### TOMB TILE

Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220)

Gray pottery. 27 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 16". 35-287/5

Tombs constructed of hollow pottery tiles usually look like miniature rooms with peaked roofs. The tiles were made in molds and then stamped with decorative designs.

Below—left

### CHIMERA HEAD (one of a pair)

Three Kingdoms period, 3rd century

Limestone. 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". 34-95/2

This head and its mate once served as counterweights for large gateposts. The blocky character of the design is in keeping with styles of the Three Kingdoms period.

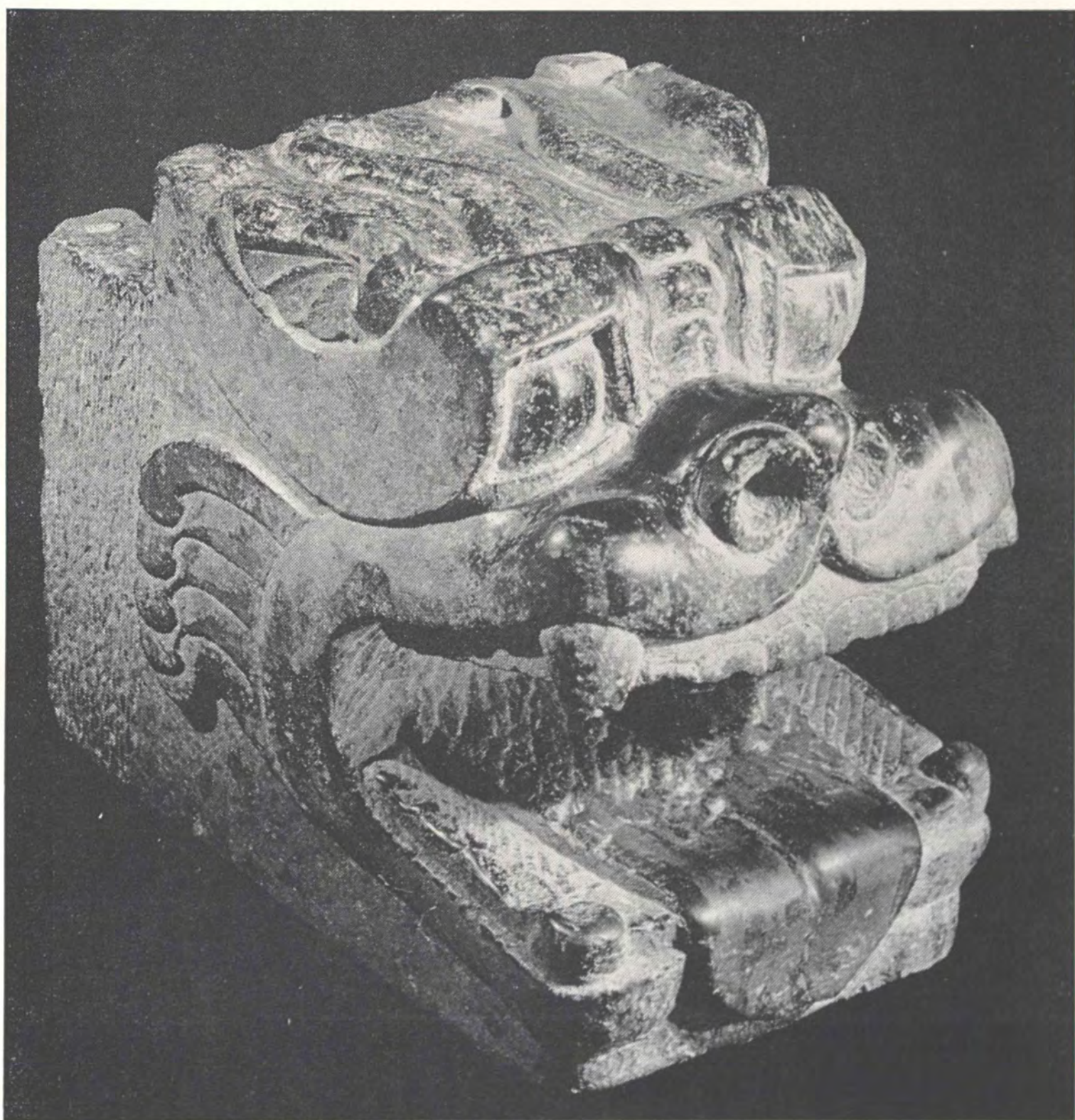
Below—right

### CASING SLAB OF TOMB OR OFFERING CHAMBER

Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220)

Limestone. 40" x 24". 34-73

In the Han Dynasty, underground tomb chambers and offering shrines above ground, when made of stone, were frequently decorated with low-relief scenes in a wide variety of techniques. Here the relief is relatively high and the outline of the forms slightly rounded. These designs probably simulate wall paintings of the period.







# SAKYAMUNI BUDDHA

Northern Wei Dynasty (386-535)

Dated 494

Gray stone with traces of color

21¼" high. 59-47

Sakyamuni Buddha is shown seated, clasping a fold of garment in his left hand, the right raised in the *abhaya mudra* of protection. The sharp, precise carving, with lightly incised drapery folds, is a refinement of the earlier, archaic fifth century style of the Yün-kang cave chapels. A long inscription on the back of the nimbus states the image was made at the behest of a certain Yin Shou-kuo in April, 494.





Above—left

**SEATED BUDDHA**

Northern Wei Dynasty (386-535)

Second half 5th century

Polychromed clay. 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high. 71-26

From the cave chapels of Tun-huang in western China, the image was originally attached to the wall of a sanctuary as part of "a thousand Buddha" pattern.

Below—left

**BUDDHIST STELE**

Northern Wei Dynasty (386-535)

Early 6th century

Buff sandstone. 27 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high. 51-27

The curiously linear and elongated style is characteristic of a regional school centered around Sian, Shensi Province.

Below—right

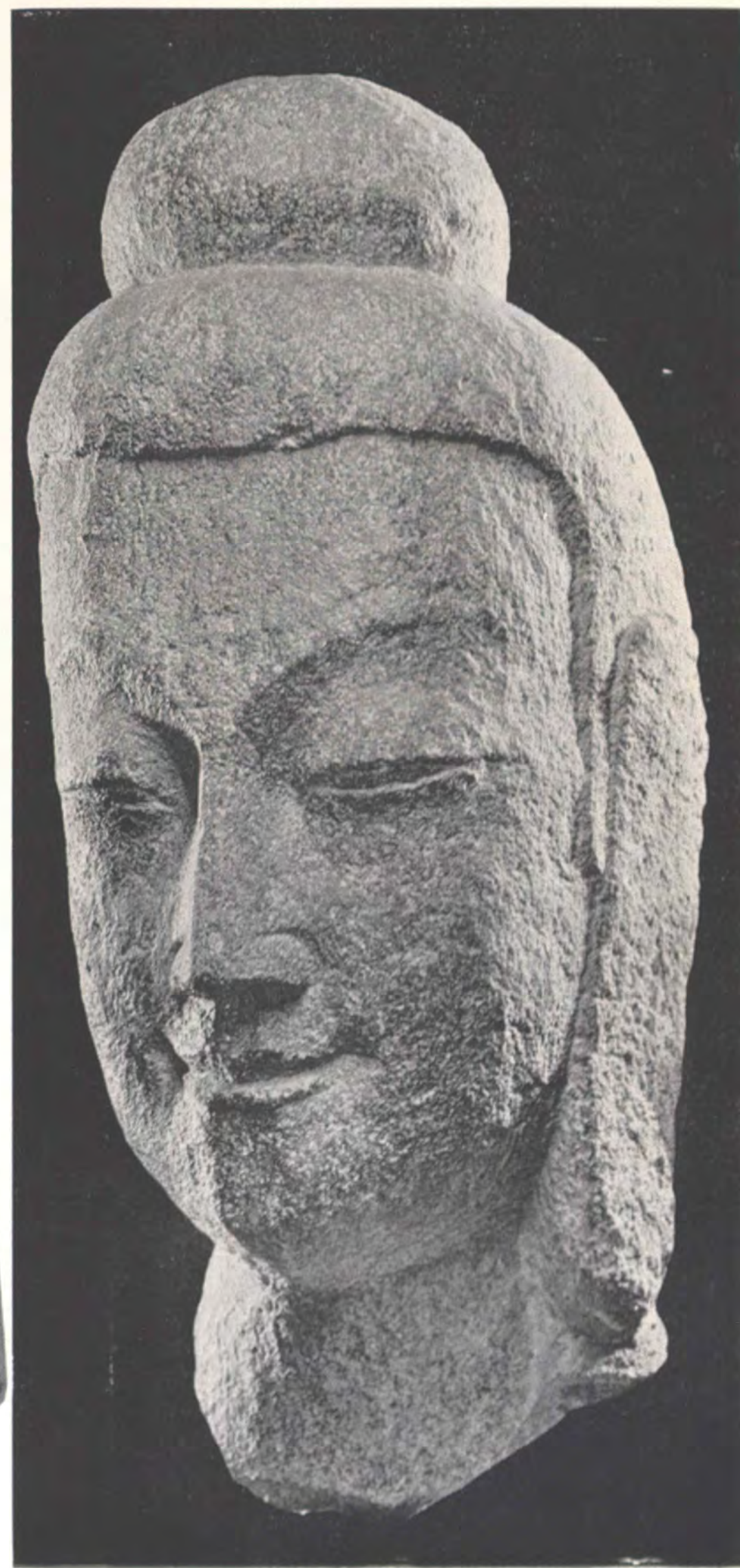
**HEAD OF A BUDDHA IMAGE**

Northern Wei Dynasty (386-535)

Second half 5th century

Buff sandstone. 15" high. 31-83

The head comes from the cave chapels of Yün-kang in northern Shansi. Although it is still in the early archaic style, the narrowness of the face and high spring of the eyebrows suggest that it dates from the latest works at the site in the 490's.







Above—left

**SEATED BUDDHA IMAGE**

Northern Wei Dynasty (386-535)

Late 4th to early 5th century

Gilt-bronze. 4½" high. 51-25

The symmetrical, almost diagrammatic folds of the garments and such features as the large head and face-on guardian lions suggest this is the earliest example of Chinese Buddhist sculpture in the collection.

Above—right

**SEATED BUDDHA IMAGE**

Northern Wei Dynasty (386-535)

5th century

Gilt-bronze. 6½" high. 31-137/29

The image is in many ways similar to that on the stone shrine, no. 59-47, reproduced on page 28. In the flame-like folds on the left arm and in another detail, however, it is closer to the early sculpture of the Yün-kang cave chapels and may date from around the middle of the fifth century.

Below—left

**GUARDIAN LION (One of a Pair)**

Northern Wei Dynasty (386-535) to Western Wei (535-554)

About 530 to 540

Gray stone. 20½" high. 40-31/1,2

The stone lions, as a pair, stood originally on either side of an underground tomb door, acting not only as guardians but also as counter-weights for the gate posts. The vitality of the period is evident in the taut linear quality and heraldic stylization.





THE EMPRESS AS DONOR  
WITH ATTENDANTS  
Northern Wei Dynasty (386-535)  
About 522

Dark limestone with traces of color. 6' 4" x 9' 1". 40-38  
From the Pin-yang cave at the Buddhist cave-chapels of Lung-men, Honan.





**BUDDHIST STELE**  
(front and two sides)

Western Wei Dynasty (535-554)

About 535 to 545

Dark gray limestone

8' 2" x 35½". 37-27

Stelae of this kind were set up in Buddhist temples, frequently in the courtyard, as an expression of faith by one or more subscribing donors. This monumental example comes from Jui-ch'eng Hsien in southwestern Shansi Province.



Right

### TORSO OF A BODHISATTVA IMAGE

Sui Dynasty (581-618)

White marble. 5' 2" high. 40-46

A style prevalent during the Sui Dynasty is well illustrated in this example. The garment folds are in markedly low relief, symmetrically arranged, and this simplicity, in the case of the bodhisattvas, is relieved by opulent jewelry often of great elaboration. There is only a very slight transition in the planes from front to back, the image is purely frontal, and the sides of the body scarcely exist. In this figure the arms, head, and probably the side scarves were joined to the torso with iron clamps. Since the marble was originally covered with a light coat of gesso and the whole painted and gilded, the manner of construction would not be visible.



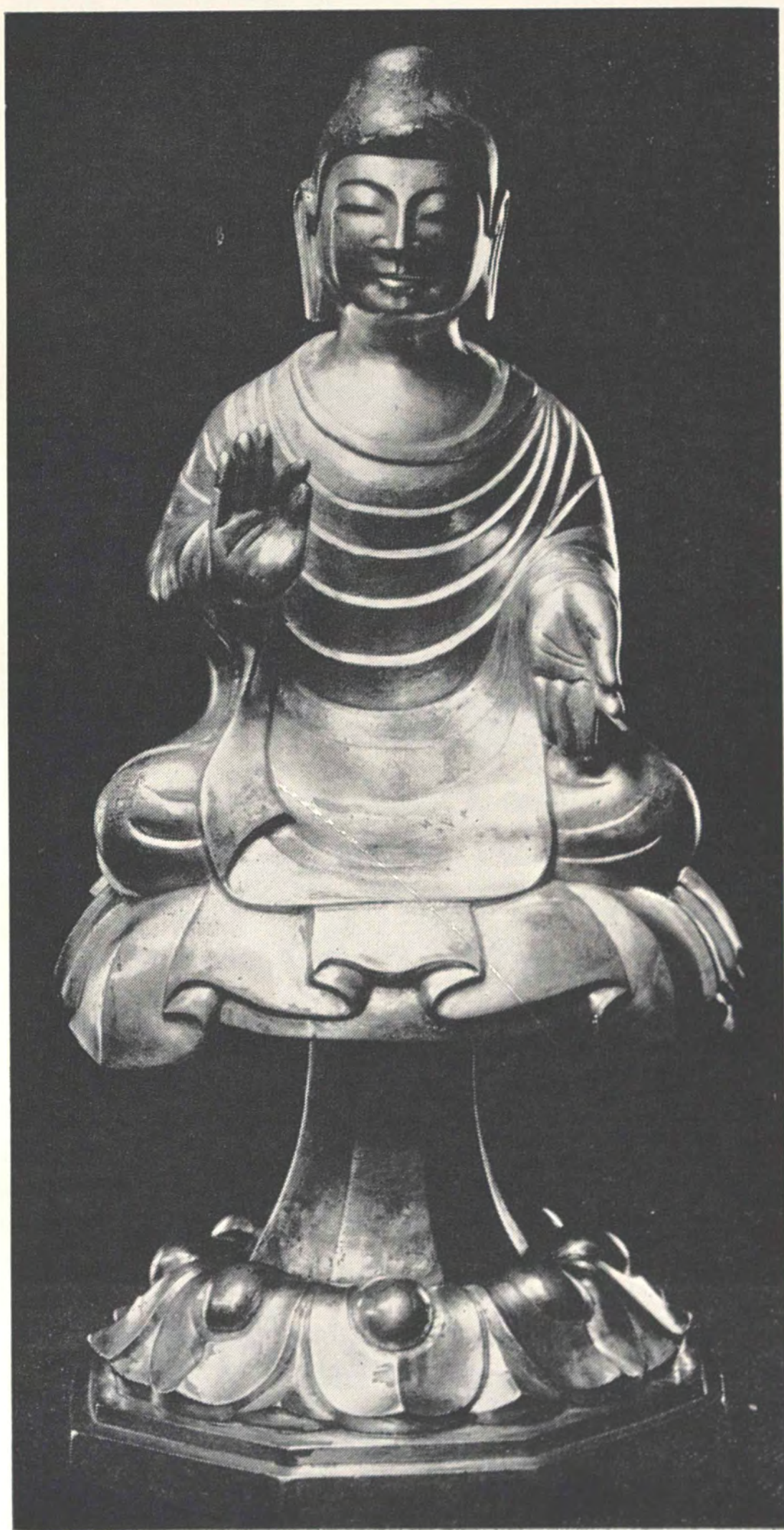
Left

### SAKYAMUNI BUDDHA

Northern Ch'i Dynasty (550-577)

Gilt-bronze. 7½" high. 46-38

There are ample historical records about Buddhist images of monumental size cast in bronze. All such large sculptures, unfortunately, have disappeared, and today Buddhist sculpture in metal can be enjoyed only in images of relatively small size. In this example, such details as the absence of the snail-curls on the head, relatively large hands, and neatly pleated robes are elements of a style prevalent in the third quarter of the sixth century.







Detail, reverse

### BUDDHIST STELE

Northern Ch'i Dynasty (550-577)

Dated 569

Gray limestone with polychrome. 7' 7½" high. 32-52

In 569 this stele was erected at a temple near Chang-tzu Hsien, Shansi Province, by over two hundred donors inspired by the preaching of a priest named Tao-lin. Here the old linear style has been abandoned in favor of more fully modelled forms. The three main figures in high relief, especially, reflect the influence of plastic Indian sculpture of the Gupta period. Although the back of the stele (illustrated at right above) has the conventional cap of closely intertwined dragons, the upper third of the front has been treated in a very different way, with a pictorial scene of the stupa of Prabhutaratna borne up by an atlantean figure, heavenly beings, and dragons—a treatment that appears to be unique on a stele of this size.





### STANDING BODHISATTVA IMAGE

Northern Chou (558-581) to  
Sui Dynasty (581-618)

About 580 to 600

Yellowish conglomerate stone, traces  
of color. 20¼" high. 59-39

In the second half of the sixth century there was, in Chinese Buddhist sculpture, a growing tendency toward incorporating elements of styles from India. Here the plasticity of the body, swaying slightly on one hip, the fluid, naturalistic treatment of the garments, and the rich profusion of jewels all foreshadow the high style of the next two centuries, during the T'ang Dynasty. The conglomerate stone with a yellow cast suggest that this image may have been made in the region of Sian, Shensi Province, the capital of the Northern Chou, Sui, and T'ang Dynasties.



### KUAN-YIN BODHISATTVA

Sui Dynasty (581-618)

Light gray limestone, traces of gilding. 4' 4" high. 35-308

Among the most beautiful images in the collections, this Kuan-yin sums up one aspect of Buddhist sculpture at the close of the sixth century. In the superb understatement, Chinese devotion to the linear, bas-relief manner is fully realized. Every element is reduced to the descriptive minimal, the restrained elegance heightened by the youthful, almost childlike face.





Above—left

**TORSO OF A BUDDHA IMAGE**

Northern Chou (558-581) to Sui Dynasty (581-618)

About 575 to 600

Yellowish conglomerate stone. 28" high. 33-91

As in the case of the bodhisattva, no. 59-39, p. 35, the full body and developed drapery derive from Indian sculpture of the Gupta period. The conglomerate stone suggests the region of Sian in Shensi Province.

Above—right

**KUAN-YIN BODHISATTVA**

Sui Dynasty (581-618)

Bronze with turquoise inlay. 12" high. 32-186/9

The deity is identifiable as Kuan-yin by the bottle in the left hand and remains of a willow branch held in the right.



Left

**HEAD OF A GUARDIAN FIGURE**

Northern Ch'i Dynasty (550-577)

Gray limestone. 21¾" high. 53-48

The details of the headdress suggest that this fragment probably comes from the cave chapels of Hsiang-t'ang Shan in Hopei Province.





# FRONT OF A BUDDHIST SHRINE

Late Sui (581-618) to early  
T'ang Dynasty (618-906)

First quarter of the 7th century

Gray limestone. 27 1/4" high. 37-17

The stone was originally the front of a small shrine or stupa. The door is protected by guardian figures, lions, and twisting dragons. The delights of paradise are indicated by the dancing figure above the door and the musical angels drifting down on either side. The cutting is as direct and vigorous as the concept is dynamic and exuberant. It is noteworthy that the largest dragons and certain other elements of the design are represented as though emerging out of the stone.





#### BUDDHA IMAGE

T'ang Dynasty (618-906)

Late 7th to first half of the 8th century

Sandstone. 32-65/2

Images of Buddha seated with legs pendant are generally identified as the Buddha Maitreya who presided over the Tushita Paradise and is destined to be the next incarnate Buddha. The sculpture comes from the cave-chapels of T'ien-lung Shan.



#### GUARDIAN LION

T'ang Dynasty (618-906)

Late 7th to 8th century

White marble with traces of polychrome. 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high. 46-85

It was during the seventh and eighth centuries, at the height of the T'ang Dynasty, that truly three dimensional sculpture attained full maturity. This lion is a supreme example of the blending of stylization and realism.







## THE BODHISATTVA KUAN-YIN

11th to early 12th century

Polychromed wood. 7' 11" high. 34-10

Bodhisattvas are deities who, unlike the Buddhas, have forgone entrance into nirvana until that time when all sentient beings shall have attained enlightenment. Of these, Kuan-yin became the most popular as the traditionally accepted deity of mercy and compassion, answering all prayers and protecting the devout against numerous calamities. The fabled home of Kuan-yin is an island in the Southern Sea named Potalaka. In this image the deity is shown seated on a deeply weathered and mossy rockery, in a variation of the "royal ease" pose. Originally this rockery probably continued up and around the image creating a grotto by the sea.

The last creative epoch of Chinese Buddhist sculpture extended from the 11th century to the opening years of the 14th century, under the Yüan Dynasty. Little is known about sculpture in central and south China during these centuries, but in north China, especially in Shansi and Hopei provinces, a number of splendid images in wood and clay have survived from the 11th and 12th centuries.

This image epitomizes the best qualities of the tradition in which a new kind of humanism imbues the image with a gentle

and benign calm. The high gods are more approachable and immediate in emotional appeal than were the more austere, but more religiously profound images of an earlier time. The manner is ornate, with all the sumptuous dress of a bodhisattva, including the dhoti skirt, scarfs, a profusion of jewels, and high headdress.

The treatment of the hair in this example, together with certain details of jewelry, as well as the way the bottom of the skirt and a scarf end are drawn out on the right, set the image apart from the standard style of Shansi where so many large wood sculptures originate, and these stylistic elements also suggest it may be one of the earlier Kuan-yin images of this general type. Although the present gold, bright pigment, and designs in raised gesso are probably no earlier than the mid-16th century, the original coloring was, in all likelihood, equally intense.

Behind the image may be seen a section of a large wall-painting, 50 feet wide and 25 feet high. The theme is Tejaprabha Buddha accompanied by the deified sun, moon, planets, guardians, and numerous attendants. The fresco was painted about 1300 and comes from Kuang-sheng Ssu, in Chao-ch'eng Hsien, Shansi province.





### KUAN-YIN BODHISATTVA

Yüan Dynasty (1279-1368)

13th-14th century

Wood with traces of polychrome. 5' 9" high. 59-70

The image is identified as Kuan-yin by the small figure of Amitabha Buddha in the headdress. Sculpturally it is characteristic of the last important phase of Buddhist art. A certain heaviness is somewhat offset by the twisting scarves with their deep folds creating a strong pattern of light and shade. The concept of the figure, half-turning and gently bending, is a more pictorial manner than found in earlier works. A somewhat similar figure in the Metropolitan Museum can be dated by inscription to 1282.



### BODHISATTVA

Probably Chin Dynasty (1115-1234)

12th century

Wood with polychrome. 6' 3" high. 51-42

The Tartar dynasties of Liao and Chin that controlled large parts of north China from the tenth to about the mid-thirteenth centuries, inherited the late T'ang tradition in Buddhist art. The temples of Shansi are especially rich in sculpture from this period executed in both wood and clay. This image, most likely Kuan-yin and one of the best in Western collections, is typical of the wood sculpture from southern Shansi along the Fen River valley, and is a century or more earlier than the Kuan-yin on the left. A manuscript was found in a hollow cavity of the back with an account of this, and two other images forming a trinity, being repaired and repainted in 1349. The figure was probably made in the latter part of the twelfth century and refurbished, then, some 150 years later.





Left

## HEAD OF A LOHAN

10th-11th century (?)

Dry-lacquer with polychrome. 12" high. 31-84

In the dry-lacquer technique the figure was sculptured in clay, then covered over with layers of hemp cloth soaked with lacquer which, when dry, formed a tough, durable outer casing. The clay core was dug out, and the exterior of the then hollow figure was finished with gesso and painted. Although the Lohan types may have followed a set tradition, many of the best examples have an impressive portrait quality, as though based on observation of a living prelate.

Right

## LOHAN

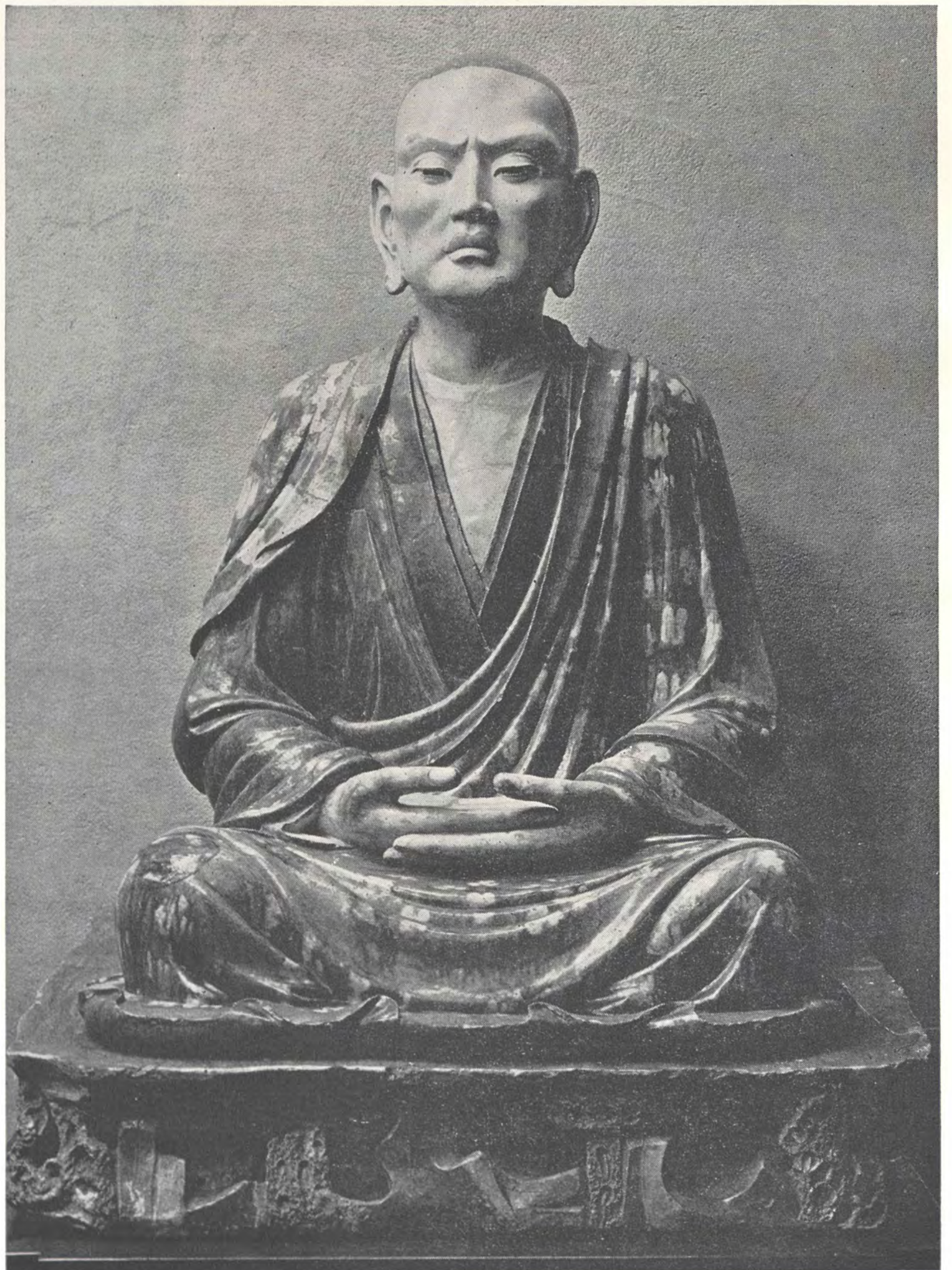
Liao-Chin Dynasties (907-1234)

10th-12th century

Pottery with three-color glaze

40" high. 34-6

Unlike the Bodhisattva, a divine being dedicated to the salvation of all sentient beings, the Lohan (known as Arhat in India) is concerned only with his own personal salvation and his own attainment to Nirvana. The images of the Lohan, for this reason, show them as distinct individuals, rather than as generalized deities, and are often of an eccentric appearance that, in later centuries, borders on caricature. They are generally shown in a group of sixteen and later, after the tenth century, a series of eighteen. This figure comes from a famous set found some years ago in the hills south of Peking. He is seated with his hands in *dhyana mudra*, signifying profound concentration, and this withdrawal from mundane things is vividly expressed in the strongly modelled face. The "three-color" glaze—green, yellow and white—is a continuation of a T'ang Dynasty scheme that reached its greatest brilliance in the sumptuous funerary ceramics of the eighth century.





Right

KUAN-YIN

Probably Chin Dynasty  
(1115-1234)

12th century

Wood. 25" high. 37-16

Although only a fragment, the image is sculptured in the best tradition of the Shansi school and belongs in the same tradition as the large standing figure, no. 51-42 shown on page 41. Originally, when complete, the figure was seated in the *maharajalila* pose, the arm resting on the knee of the upraised right leg, and the left leg pendant.



Left

AMITABHA BUDDHA OF THE 48 VOWS

Liao Dynasty (907-1115)

Early 11th century

Gilt bronze. 10 1/4" high. 46-84

The forty-eight vows of Amitabha were that he would not enter into Nirvana until all beings shared it with him. Very few bronze images of this size have survived from the relatively short Liao Dynasty of the Northeast. Salient features of the style are the short legs in relation to the torso, the elaborate double lotus throne supported on four or more cabriole legs, and the rather curious undulating folds seen here on the drapery over the legs and lower arms.





**SARCOPHAGUS (detail)**

Northern Wei Dynasty (386-535), about 525 A.D.  
Limestone. 7' 4" long, 24 1/2" max. height  
33-1543/1-3

The engraved scenes on the sides illustrate episodes from the lives of paragons of filial piety, the one shown here being from the life of the filial son Tung Yung. The set includes two sides and one end.



# Chinese Painting

Chinese painting presents a rich diversity of types and traditions, ranging from iconic religious art (p. 48) and didactic art in service to the state (p. 47) to painting dedicated to aristocratic court life (p. 46). Some pictures were meant to stir human sentiment of a fragile sort (p. 56), others to expose the foibles of man in hopes of showing him the way to enlightenment (p. 73). Landscapes might have been intended to be merely pleasing (p. 50) or to be an expression of the artist's qualities as a man (p. 52), in which case painting assumed literary functions much like poetry. Styles, too, varied widely. The meticulous and brightly colored (p. 64) passed side by side with the roughly and dramatically done (p. 63). Realism could be faithfully observed (p. 54, below), or mockingly challenged (p. 69).

Silk and paper have been the basic materials of Chinese painting for over two millennia, a circumstance which has lent an uncommon unity to Chinese painting. Both demand a fluid technique, for which water color is alone suitable. Each of the numerous varieties of silk and paper has its peculiar properties. Silk is especially suited to effects of translucency, solid modelling, and atmospheric distance of a kind which would be difficult to achieve with paper. Its weave also holds mineral pigment better than paper. Paper offers an infinite range of textural and tonal effects, and will react to a brush so differently from silk that other formal qualities of line and wash become possible.

Colors do include vegetable dyes, but mineral pigments predominate. Blues and greens come from azurite and malachite, the most commonly seen red being cinnabar. The hue of a mineral pigment depends upon the size of the particles, rather than upon the degree of dilution with water. The smaller the particle, the lighter its value. Made of pine or oil soot molded into cakes, Chinese ink is so versatile in its own right that it even offers coloristic sensations though actually monochromatic. It can range from rich, glossy black, appearing to be metallic, to the subtlest diaphanous wash of pale gray. It may be applied with wide variation of wetness in weak or strong concentrations, so that formal qualities may embrace the widest gamut, from rough, ropy, and heavily textured, to smooth, sinewy, and crisply defined.

The Chinese brush is perhaps the most sensitive instrument ever devised for painting. Different brushes demand different manipulation and favor certain visual effects. The characteristics of a brush depend upon the kind of animal hair used, the stiffness of both the core and outer mantle, and upon the

length of the tip. These factors will influence the formal qualities of the strokes as well as its ability to hold and release ink as pressure on the point varies. A fairly stiff brush with resilient tip would, for instance, be favored for the outline of a wintry pine (p. 51).

Technique must be unhesitating; every stroke is truly the graph of the force and movement of the artist's hand. Once committed, the stroke is inalterable. From beginning to end it must be consistent and self-fulfilling. No second thoughts or corrections are possible; the brush would transmit them unmercifully, spoiling the coherency of the stroke.

Mastery of technique can be attained only through long practice. The Chinese very early evolved sets of conventions for rendering trees, figures, and mountain formations. These have been classified by technique and "school", and passed on as part of the basic repertory an artist would be expected to learn. A withered, gnarled pine having branches like "crab claws" would be associated with Li Ch'eng (p. 50). Texture strokes (*ts'un*), which describe a rocky surface, range from small repeated dots, called "rain drop" *ts'un* (p. 50) to broad slashes with the side of the brush, known as "axe-cut" *ts'un* (p. 56).

It is to these conventions and the works of earlier masters that an artist turns to perfect his technique. The learning process is aided by the fact that the materials of painting are the same as those used in writing. Training in calligraphy not only brings mastery over the brush and many strokes common to painting, but also leads to a sensitivity to nuances of line. Even though the calligrapher might have an image of the ideograph formed in his mind, the composition of the whole graph grows from the very first stroke. Each successive stroke must adjust subtly to those already written. Much the same applies to painting. The painter may lightly sketch the main outlines first, but then as soon as the first stroke is laid down, the remainder of the picture must grow from and take into account this first stroke. Thus, every brushstroke is evident and of vital importance. It is by the individual brushstroke, its graphic abstract qualities, and its representational success or defiance that the picture will first be judged.

Having mastered materials and techniques and having made conventions second nature, the painter finds that obstacles actually disappear into a kind of freedom where execution becomes intuitive, much like an improvised dance performance. The artist is thus left alone with his genius, to be measured against the standard of all tradition.

MFW





### TUNING THE LUTE AND DRINKING TEA

Attributed to Chou Fang (active about 750-800)

Ink and color on silk. 29 $\frac{5}{8}$ " long, 11" high. 32-159/1

Chou Fang's manner eschews dramatic energy and vibrant drawing in favor of a placid style that utilizes thin, even lines arranged with a calm regularity which strives for elegance and spare representation of drapery folds and faces. Silent economy of composition is another feature: each figure has been treated first as something of an isolated unit, and then fitted into a rather static arrangement that seems to prefer jumps in a well-measured pace to overt, dynamic flow. The trees, rock, and turning of the figures set up a zigzag pattern calculated to establish a narrow foreground stage of space close to the observer. The dress of the figures and the corpulence of the three court ladies, which is reinforced by contrast to the slender serving girls, follow eighth century fashion and ideals of beauty. Tiny, almond-shaped eyes, pinched mouths, and high, wide-set eyebrows recur in the iconography of this tradition. This picture might well be a faithful copy executed in the tenth century.



Detail





Above

# THE EIGHT NOBLE OFFICIALS (three details)

Attributed to Ch'en Hung (active 725-after 756)

Ink and color on silk

32 $\frac{3}{8}$ " long, 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ " high. 49-40

The painting originally depicted eight figures, but through the ravages of time and neglect, now lacks the first two. The brushwork is broad and robust, in keeping with the liveliness sought after in the agitation of the drapery, the "flying ribbons" of the headgear, and in the effort to imbue the figures with vivid individual characterization, albeit akin to theatrical pantomime of stock types. The technique of modelling drapery and faces is painstaking, but is naturally and knowingly done: red underdrawing merges with layers of carefully shaded washes of pigment.

Right

# THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF LAO-CHÜN (handscroll detail)

Wang Li-yung (active about 1120-about 1150)

Ink and color on silk

12' 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " long, 17 $\frac{5}{8}$ " high. 48-17

The painting is an archaistic performance, whose style of long, thin, even drapery lines, composition, and iconography may be traced back to the T'ang Dynasty (618-906).







Above—left

### TWO BODHISATTVAS BURNING INCENSE

Artist unknown, late 10th-early 11th century

Ink and color on clay. 69" x 35". 50-64A

Gift of Mr. C. T. Loo

Above—right

### KUAN-YIN BODHISATTVA

Artist unknown, second half of 9th century

Ink and color on clay. 69" x 35". 50-64B

Gift of Mr. C. T. Loo

This mural was discovered underneath the one on the left. Certain areas have been restored, notably the proper left shoulder and upper arm.



Left

### KUAN-YIN BODHISATTVA SEATED ON A LOTUS (detail)

Artist unknown, late 10th-early 11th century

Ink and color on clay. 84" x 61½". 52-6





TRAVELERS IN A MOUNTAIN  
LANDSCAPE

Artist unknown

Late 9th-10th century

Lead white, ink, and traces of  
cinnabar on silk

53½" x 29½". 40-15

This picture represents a transitional phase in landscape painting between the scattered isolation of compositional elements of T'ang painting and the coherent, unified compositions of the late Five Dynasties and early Sung period. Multiplication of complicated shapes to build up a large mountain is significant for this phase, while the modelling of rocks is approached directly and lacks the homogeneous, unifying system of strokes seen in slightly later painting.





BUDDHIST TEMPLE AMID CLEARING MOUNTAIN PEAKS

Traditionally attributed to Li Ch'eng (died 967)

Ink and slight color on silk. 44" x 22". 47-71





# FISHERMEN (handscroll detail)

Hsü Tao-ning (died about 1066/67)

Ink on silk. 82" long, 19" high. 33-1559

Early Northern Sung landscape painters approached their subject with a psychological reserve that precluded expressive content not proper to Nature itself and sought to describe, in a consistent, unified way, the nuances received by the senses. The approach is that of a prosaic cataloguer, enlivened, perhaps for the first time in Chinese history, by a keen visual perception of the physical world that eschewed any hint of a decorative interpretation of the forms of observed Nature. The world that emerged from this kind of painting is one of unassailable permanence and heroic vastness, at times monumentally indifferent to man, at times, as here, chillingly bleak. Hsü Tao-ning was a genuine eccentric, whose abrupt and uncereemonious social behavior carried over into his practice of painting. Contemporary anecdotes recount how he painted with dashing abandon and bravura, inspired by alcohol. This picture, which was most likely painted while in a state of high exhilaration induced by wine, is a virtuoso performance of ragged, spontaneous brushwork, at once powerful and articulate, and of diaphanous washes that model contour and bulk with a subtlety of light and dark not found in any other Chinese painting. The conception is genius, while its realization is the product of a lifetime of devotion to the perfection of an intuitive manner that is inimitably one's own.





# VERDANT MOUNTAINS (handscroll details)

Chiang Shen (about 1090-after 1144)

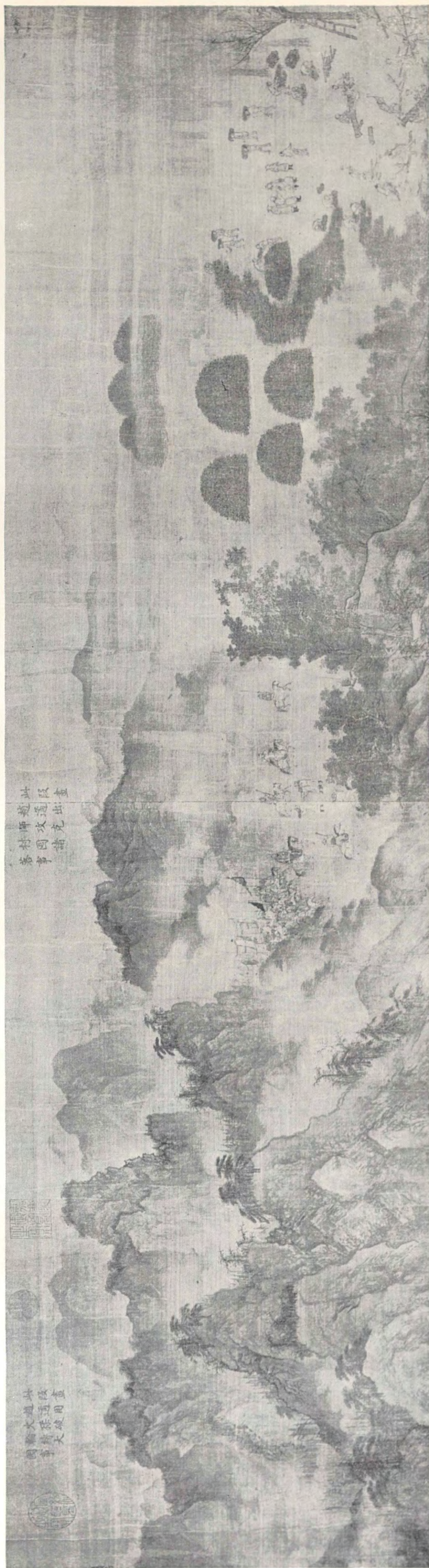
Ink and pale blue wash on silk. 9' 8 1/2" long, 12 3/4" high. 53-49

Chiang Shen was one of the third-generation adherents of the newly arisen literati painting who carried the style and its ideals over into the early years of the Southern Sung period. Meaning is no longer tied to content purely proper to Nature in this kind of art, but rather, the images of Nature serve as a vehicle for the spontaneous release of personally expressive forces and for communication with kindred spirits. Facile descriptive technique has been replaced by a comparatively arbitrary manipulation of forms and spatial recession aimed at intensified abstract visual impact, in which archaic allusions to earlier styles, in this case the styles of the tenth century masters Tung Yüan and Chü-jan, provide yet another level of meaning closely connected with the functions of literature.



Details





Above

# CHAO YÜ's PACIFICATION OF THE BARBARIANS SOUTH OF LU (handscroll detail)

Artist unknown, second half of the 12th century

Ink and color on silk. 11' 2" long, 15½" high. 58-10

The actual subject of this scroll may very well not be that given in the title above, but rather a narrative of events belonging to the history of the Chin Tartars. Painting under the Chin conservatively carried on the traditions of Northern Sung, marked here by the complex narrative, the panoramic range of the scenes, mountain ranges of impressive scale, and finely drawn trees.



Left

# LANDSCAPE IN THE STYLE OF LI T'ANG

Artist unknown, late 12th century

Ink and color on silk. 9¾" x 97/8". R70-2

Gift of Mr. Robert Hatfield Ellsworth

Several distinctive features link this picture to the style of Li T'ang (1049-after 1130): the tall, slab-like layered cliff on the right, the feathery foliage of the distant trees, the precise outlines of the foreground trees and their elegantly patterned arrangement, and the shapes of the foreground rocks, as well as their thin outlines and sketchy modelling strokes applied over washes.



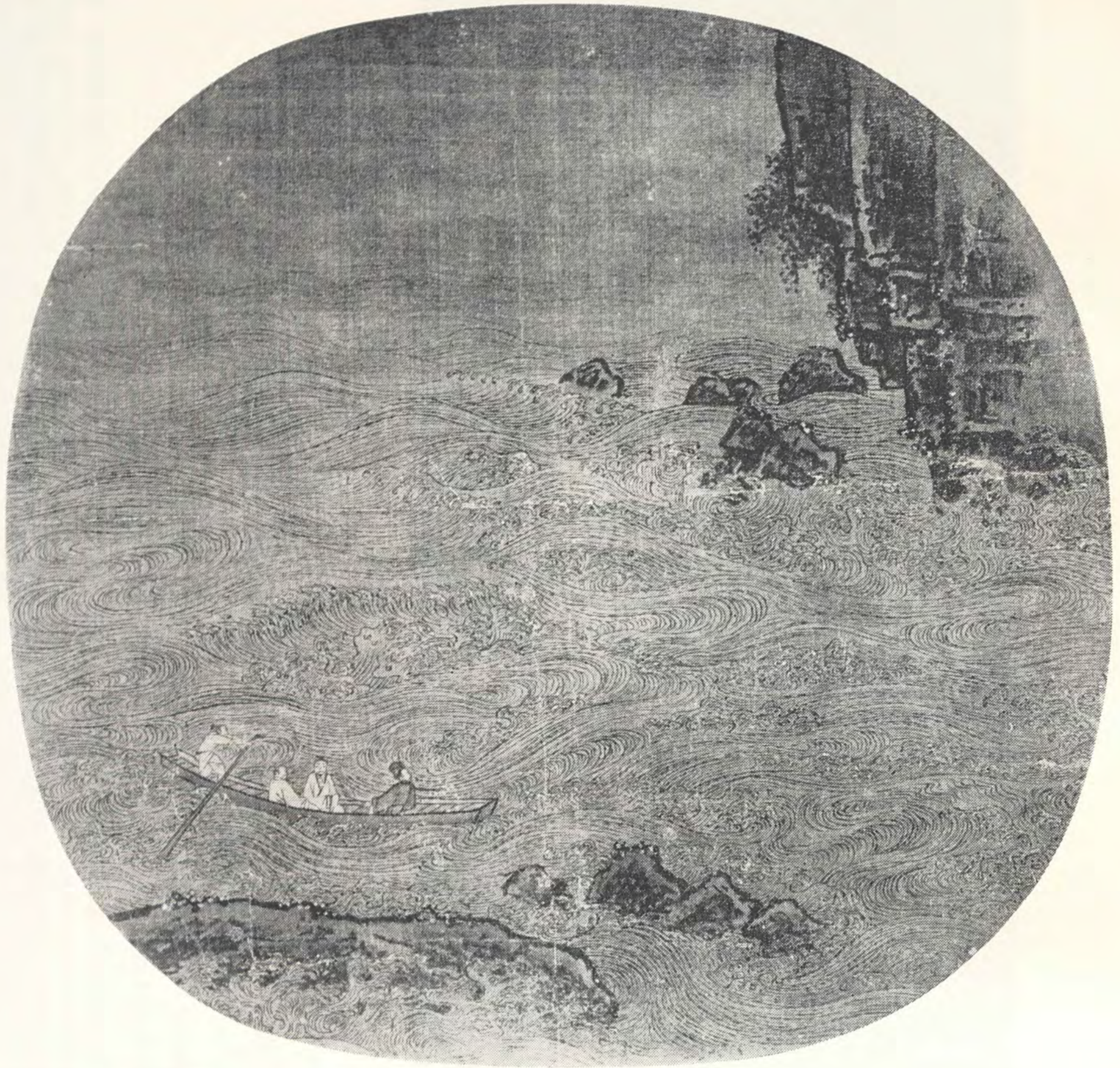
## THE RED CLIFF

Li Sung (active about 1190-1230)

Ink and slight color on silk

9 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". 49-79

Two, perhaps three, different styles may be associated with Li Sung, who was a member of the Court sponsored Painting Academy in Hangchow. The abbreviated treatment of the cliff and rocks in suggestive terms of simplified, compressed images, slabbed or lumpish in shape, provides contrast, within a single picture, to the meticulous style of the seething water, done with fine, tremulous brushstrokes. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries were a time of remarkable innovation in composition and of experimentation in intensified graphic pattern and interval, both of which have been consummately exploited here. The picture is signed on the cliff, near the edge of the silk.



## FIGHTING BIRDS ON A FLOWERING BRANCH

Artist unknown, 12th century

Ink and color on silk

9 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". 49-13

Intimate studies of flowers and birds, done in a fine, meticulous style, were much favored by the esthete Hui-tsung, last of the Northern Sung emperors, who sponsored competitions in the Painting Academy designed to test the artists' skill at realistic painting and inventiveness in pictorial interpretation of poetic passages. The downy texture of the small birds has been wrought with a skill uncommon even in the twelfth century, while the convincing curling of the leaves back and forth in space and the careful articulation of the blossoms provide flawless consistency to the performance. Beyond mere technical skill, the artist has managed to capture the sharp hostility of the two birds.





COMPOSING POETRY ON A SPRING  
OUTING (handscroll details)

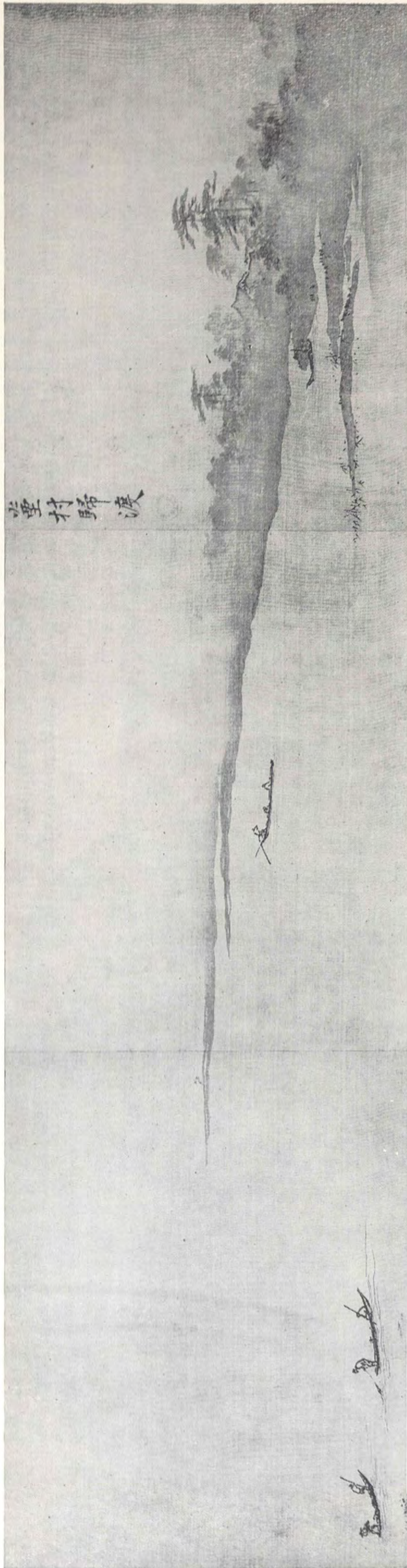
Attributed to Ma Yüan (about 1170-about 1240)

Ink and color on silk

9' 11" long, 11 $\frac{5}{8}$ " high. 63-19

This picture combines keen attention to the nuances of characterization of figures and animals with a deliberately cursory treatment of rocks and trees that aims at the visual power possible in loose brushwork and arbitrary images.





# LANDSCAPE (handscroll details)

Hsia Kuei (active about 1180-1230)

Ink on silk

7' 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" long, 11" high. 32-159/2

The twelfth and thirteenth centuries were a remarkably creative period in the academic circles of painting at Hangchow, where Ma Yüan (opposite page) and Hsia Kuei were the stylistic leaders of the day. Innovation in composition went hand in hand with ingenious exploitation of the geometric shape of the format. Here Hsia Kuei arbitrarily manipulates landscape images to capitalize on the long, narrow shape of the silk roll and to introduce overt visual drama of a kind that plays upon daring asymmetry, striking placement, and keen sensitivity to the graphic possibilities of large areas of blank silk. Explicit description of rocks and banks has been abandoned in favor of fragmentary images, more evocative than literal, done with suggestive washes of diaphanous ink and painterly slashes with the side of the brush. The landscape of Nature thus became a vehicle for translating properly human emotion, which was then the true subject, into painting.





WATER-MOON KUAN-YIN

Attributed to Yen Hui (active second half of 13th-early 14th century)

Ink, slight color, and gold on silk. 43 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 23". 49-60





Left

### FIVE DRAGONS

Attributed to Ch'en Jung (about 1210-about 1261)  
Ink on paper. 23½" long, 13½" high. 48-15

In China the dragon is revered as a mysterious but supremely benevolent creature embodying cosmic forces. Subtly mottled mists, done on dampened paper, probably with a cottony wad, fuse with the outlines of the dragons, giving an effect of obscured murkiness which has been enhanced by spraying or spattering a fine screen of ink over the surface.

### INK-BAMBOO

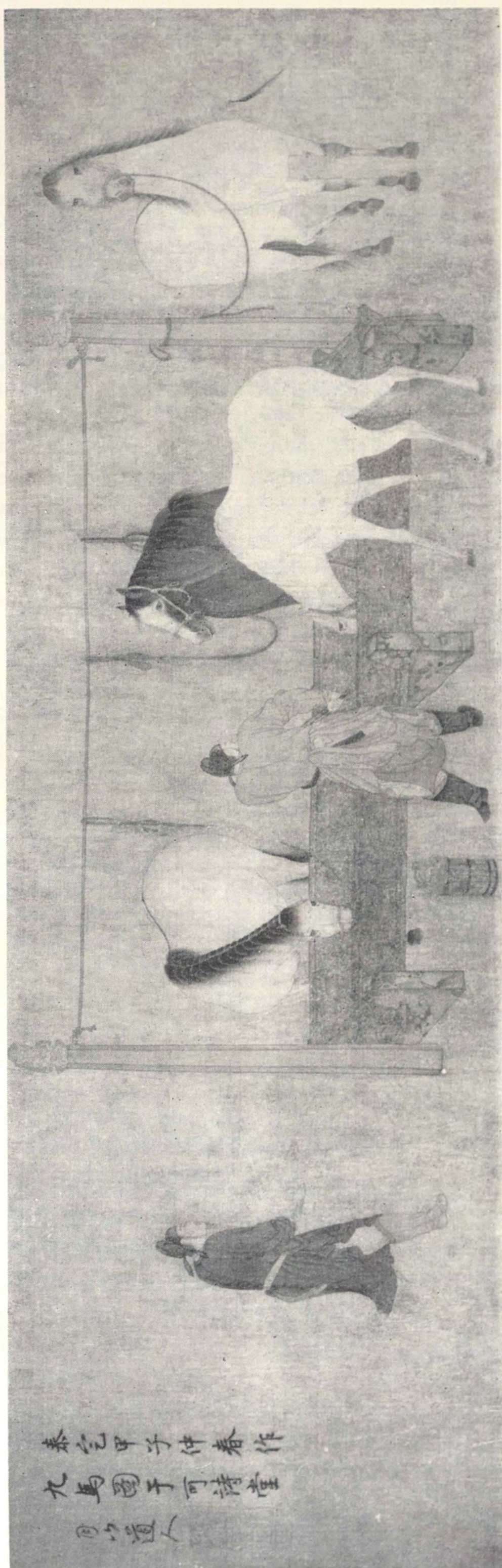
Li K'an (1245-1320)

Ink on paper. 7' 9½" long, 14¾" high. 48-16

The painting of bamboo in ink is a special branch of Chinese art, practiced especially by gentlemen scholars, who saw in the bamboo the qualities of purity and endurance in adversity which they sought to cultivate in themselves. Li K'an's zealous botanical interest in bamboo lends uncommon understanding of his subject to his painting. This is a portrait of an actual plant, with all the irregularities and idiosyncrasies of the individual. Li's remarkable technical ability can be seen in the tones of diaphanous ink subtly shifting from layer to layer.







### NINE HORSES (handscroll details)

Jen Jen-fa (1255-1328)

Dated 1324

Ink and color on silk. 8' 7" long, 12 $\frac{3}{8}$ " high. 72-8

The painting of horses has been a separate and worthy branch of Chinese painting ever since the T'ang Dynasty, when standards, both those of quality as well as of practice and composition, were laid down for all time. Here, as elsewhere, Jen Jen-fa has placed horses and grooms against a plain silk ground, a presentation which in T'ang times would have been more rarely turned to than one with a setting of trees, rocks, and vegetation. From his earliest years Jen Jan-fa committed himself to a realistic tradition of meticulous delineation, which, once mastered, remained stable throughout his life. Faces are built up first with under-drawing, usually in red, followed by minute lines or subtle washes describing wrinkles, beards, and other nuances of physical features. His drapery patterns, too, are complicated and play upon supply curving arcs and looping terminations in which a sense of physical extension and bulk never lapses into inarticulate pattern deprived of clear-cut descriptive meaning. Costume, the ethnic types of the grooms, and other iconographic features also allude to T'ang horse painting.







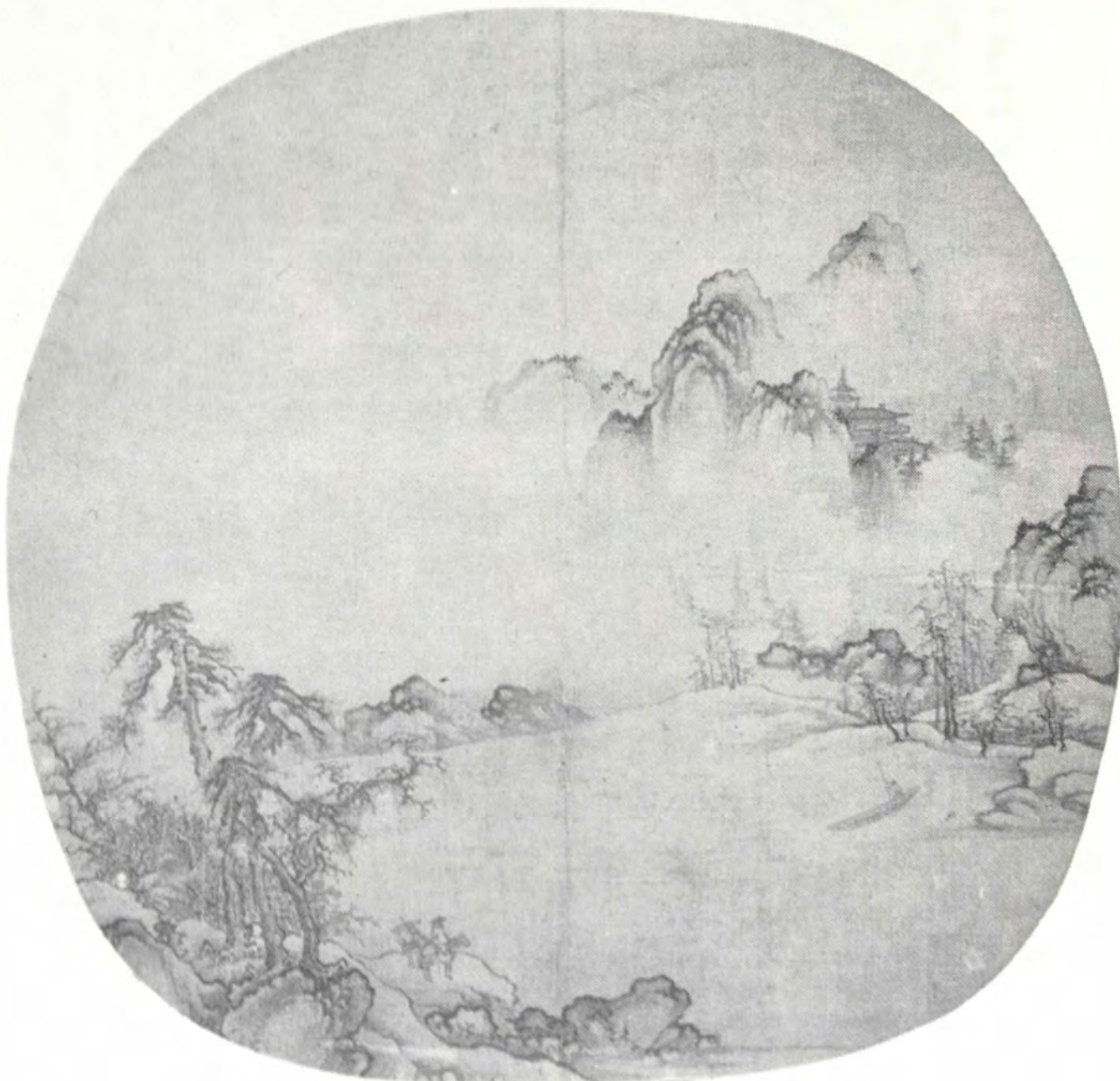
Left

## BIRDS, THORNS, AND BAMBOO

Chang Yen-fu (active first half of 14th century)  
Ink on paper. 25" x 20". 49-19

Contemporary inscription dated 1343

The artist, a Taoist living in Peking, served as an official painter at the Mongol court, where he worked not only in court-approved styles, but also in a style belonging to the precincts of taste reserved by the literati elite. As with many literati paintings, this was done in response to a specific gathering of literary gentlemen. The picture was in fact painted for another artist, Sheng Mou (opposite page), while contemporary and later men added poems in harmony with the picture. Success in this kind of picture lies neither in making an exact likeness of the subject nor in evoking a strong emotional mood. Instead, the artist's forms are to be read as a graph of a total mental activity involving his experience at large and his response to the occasion and to the people present.



Left

## WAITING FOR A FERRY IN THE CHILL OF WINTER

Artist unknown, late 13th-14th century  
Ink on silk. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ ". 46-52

The style of this picture falls squarely into the tradition of Li Ch'eng and Kuo Hsi, which is marked by a preference for wintry scenes, gnarled pines, and complicated rock formations having lumpy profiles. In earlier examples the brushwork is sharp, heavy, and tensile, maintaining an alliance between outlines and the articulation of volumetric form. The markedly asymmetrical composition, sponginess of the rocks, with a loss of articulation through self-conscious elaboration of their outlines, and the insistently complex pine trees worked into a decorative pattern are among the elements suggesting the date given above.





Above

### BAMBOO AND ROCKS

Wang Fu (1362-1416)

Ink on paper, 7' 7½" long, 14" high. 58-8

Wang Fu carried on the spirit of the Yüan dynasty literati masters, but introduced, in his bamboo painting at least, a note of dramatic manipulation of form and format which became a hallmark of much of Ming painting. The view-point is that of an insect's eye. The rocks have been daringly brought forward, almost to the surface of the paper, while recession has been arbitrarily compressed and dramatically limited by the foot of a cliff running along the upper edge of the paper. The expectations of detailed, close-up viewing have been contradicted by the vague, impressionistic rendering of the rocks. These artistic devices are to be found earlier, but the degree to which Wang exploits them, and the exaggerated manipulation of forms to exploit the edges of the scroll for pointed dramatic effect, reveal new directions in bamboo painting.

Right

### ENJOYING FRESH AIR IN A MOUNTAIN RETREAT

Sheng Mou (active about 1340-1369)

Ink and color on silk. 47¾" x 22¾". 35-173

Sheng Mou's painting makes an appeal to the immediately pleasing, forsaking overt plays upon intentional awkwardness. There is nothing unkempt about his brushwork, even when richly textured. Trees are laid out in neat distinctions of pattern, color, and foliage that preserve logic and clarity.

The rounded masses of his mountains, interspersed with clusters of small lumpy rocks, his use of masses of wet dabs of color or ink for foliage, and the articulation of mountainous form in terms of modelling strokes that look like "unravelling rope" may all be associated with a Chiangnan tradition, from which Sheng Mou emerges not so much as an archaizing revival but as a continuation of an uninterrupted undercurrent.







### ROSE MALLOW AND ROCK

Shen Chou (1427-1509)

Dated 1475

Ink and color on paper

49 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". 49-14



### LANDSCAPE IN THE STYLE OF NI TSAN

Shen Chou (1427-1509)

Dated 1484

Ink on paper. 54 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 24 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". 46-45

Shen's long and prolific career is marked by an astonishing range of style, subject, and expressive meaning. "Literati" aesthetic values lie behind the unassuming blandness of the "Rose Mallow and Rock" (above). The arrangement of the leaves is rhythmically relaxed and muted, and the variation of tone and texture of the rock, intentionally muddled. His later pictures are often imbued with dramatic graphic interaction of compositional elements and extroverted liveliness of brushwork. Whether working in a powerful, muscular style, as in "Landscape in the Style of Ni Tsan", or in a style utilizing wet, ragged brushwork and manipulation of spatial ambiguity, Shen straddles the thin line between concentrated visual energy born of such daring and the disasters of loss of control.





Above

FAMOUS SIGHTS IN TRAVELING  
THROUGH WU (handscroll detail)

Shen Chou (1427-1509)

Probably about 1480-85

Ink and color on paper

59' 1" long, 14" high

Wu refers to the region around Soochow.

Below

CLOUD-GIRDLED MOUNTAINS

Shen Chou (1427-1509)

Probably about 1495-1500

Ink on paper. 15 1/4" x 23 3/4"

This is one of five leaves by Shen Chou now mounted consecutively with a final, sixth leaf by his pupil Wen Cheng-ming.







Above

**THE NORTHERN SEA (handscroll detail)**

Chou Ch'en (active about 1500-1535)

Ink and light color on silk

53¼" long, 11¼" high. 58-55

This picture, especially in its handling of rocks and trees, is a sleek, sophisticated recasting of a Sung style associated with Li T'ang (died after 1130). Chou here insists upon an elegance of smooth, round outlines and upon clear-cut, gracefully spaced patterns coupled to precision of drawing and abhorrence of confusion. The spirit is one of elegantly controlled drama in which all parts have been meticulously choreographed.

Below

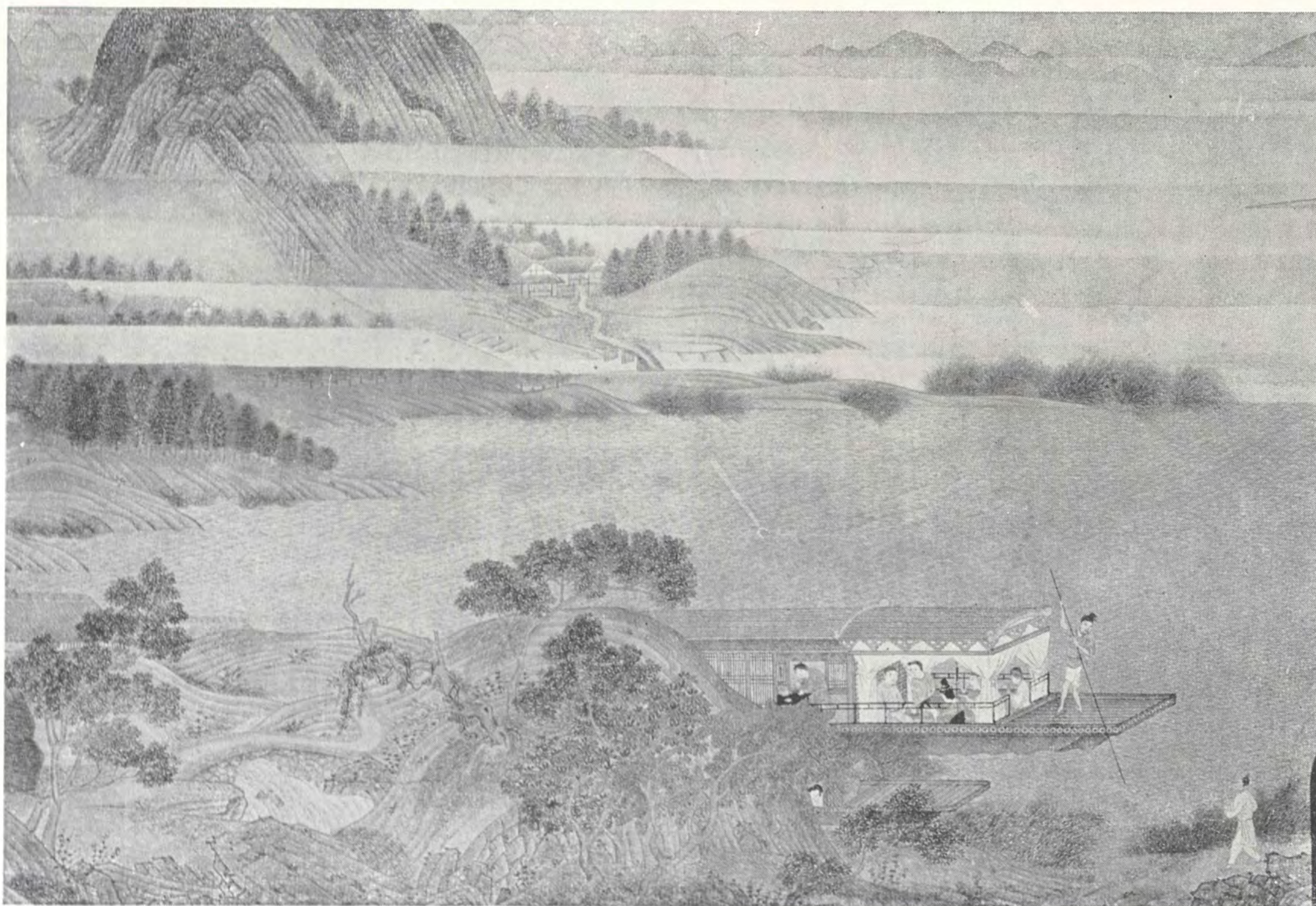
**SAYING FAREWELL AT HSÜN-YANG (handscroll detail)**

Ch'iu Ying (about 1500-1552)

Ink and full color on paper

13' 1¾" long, 13¼" high. 46-50

The picture illustrates an early ninth century poem of sorrow, exile, and the reversal of human fortunes. Its archaizing style alludes to T'ang Dynasty (618-906) painting with mountain forms constructed in schematic terms of reiterated chevron-like patterns colored bright green and blue. Ch'iu Ying was the most famous Ming Dynasty artist who worked in a fine, detailed manner.







Above

### LOTUS (handscroll detail)

Ch'en Shun (1483-1544)

Color on paper. 19' 1" long, 12" high. 31-135/34

Ch'en Shun is distinctive among Wu School artists of his day because he turned largely to a "boneless" technique for his personal style. Primacy of structure of linear drawing is eschewed in favor of modulations of washes of color and ink. Using color only in this scroll, Ch'en builds lotus leaves with layers of aquamarine left in puddles to dry, forming concentric patterns, reminiscent of cumulus clouds. Shapes tend to be amorphous or imprecise, while rhythmic relationships seem sluggish and blunted.

Below

### OLD CYPRESS AND ROCK

Wen Cheng-ming (1470-1559), painted in 1550

Ink on paper. 19 1/4" long, 10 1/4" high. 46-48

Wen Cheng-ming represents the Chinese ideal of the cultivated gentleman. Of prominent social standing and lofty, refined demeanor, he was an accomplished poet, distinguished calligrapher, and painter whose pictures sought elegance of draftsmanship and composition imbued with calligraphic strength and disdain for painstaking representation. The gnarled old cypress is meant to evoke a quality of purity and endurance in the face of hardship, and thus to personify the Confucian gentleman.







### THREE WINTER PLANTS

Yün Shou-p'ing (1633-1690)

Ink and color on paper

9¾" x 11½". 58-50/1

Although Yün Shou-p'ing produced landscape paintings of great beauty and was at ease with pictures of rocks and trees calling for rough brushwork, he is best remembered today as a master of immediately appealing flower painting in an elegantly polished style. His compositions are lucid, even when complex, and establish light rhythmic movements. Colors are delicate, and drawing, refined. Yün has selected these plants because their hardiness in cold weather allows them to be equated with the pine, bamboo, and rock as symbols of the Confucian ideal of endurance in adversity.



### JADE-WHITE BLOSSOMS

Yün Shou-p'ing (1633-1690)

Ink and color on paper

9¾" x 11½". 58-50/3

The style of painting leaves is a hallmark of Yün Shou-p'ing. With preference usually given to shapes common to fruit trees, leaves flare and taper in a shallow, smooth arc on one side, played against a more strongly bellied and tapered curve on the other, the tip pointing toward the latter. Veins are crisply branched with an eye to rhythmic gracefulness. This and the picture above are from an album of six pages of flower paintings.







Above

LANDSCAPE (detail)

Lu Chih (1496-1576)

Ming dynasty (1368-1644)

Ink and color on paper.  
44 $\frac{3}{4}$ " long, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high. 50-68

Signed and dated 1549

Suchow in the sixteenth century was the culture-radiating center of China. An extraordinary number of talented men flourished there, passing their days under the spell of lulling peacefulness in devotion to the cultivation of the refined and worthy arts. Urbane elegance and an agreeable exploitation of literati values in painting carried the day under the pre-eminent influence of Wen Cheng-ming (1470-1559), who became the nucleus for polite gatherings where refined gentlemen could communicate with men of like mind through an exchange of poetry and painting.

Lu Chih was among those in Suchow who participated in this life and who owed something of their art to Wen Cheng-ming. Despite certain connections between the two, Lu Chih nonetheless shows himself to be an independently creative genius, somewhat outside his time, whose essays in bizarre forms and compositions and whose plays upon intentional ambiguity and "constructivist" graphics adumbrate what would become the territory of the "individualist" painters of the latter half of the seventeenth century.

In this picture, any hint of a horizon or stabilizing point of reference has been rejected in favor of shifting relationships and unexpected shots into paddies of equivocal distance and situation or into valleys where buildings and groundplane are crazily askew. With a keen feeling for abstract graphic construction, Lu Chih shapes his rocks and mountains into elongated lithic formations with layer upon layer of angular facets, reinforced by his sharp, crystalline brushwork. Most prominent is his daring exploration of the possibilities of intensified abstract interest to be found in forcing several different viewpoints and gradients of spatial recession to appear side by side in the same sweep of the eye. Uncertainty of interpretation is forced in the opening passage, where rocks seem at one instance to grow up from the ground below and at second glance to be suspended from somewhere above, outside the limits of the picture. He even introduces a note of abstract play into his application of dissonant hues of orange and blue-green colors to rocky forms.

Below

THE PEACH BLOSSOM SPRING (detail)

Cha Shih-piao (1615-1698)

Ch'ing dynasty (1644-1911)

Ink and color on paper. 123 $\frac{1}{8}$ " long, 14" high. 72-4

Post-inscription by the artist dated 1696

In much of his extant *oeuvre* Cha Shih-piao strains, like so many painters of his day, for spontaneity and expressive forcefulness, with the result that his brushwork often becomes incoherent and unkempt looking, and his compositions dangerously disintegrated. But in THE PEACH BLOSSOM SPRING, a product of the mellowness of old age, strained formal manipulations give way to really genuine naturalness, unassertive and no longer embattled, and to an inescapable mood of touching human emotion, the very idea of which was usually anathema to seventeenth century painters of Cha's persuasion. It illustrates the fourth century poet T'ao Yüan-ming's tale of the accidental discovery by a fisherman of a Shangri-La that had been cut off from the "progress" of civilization for centuries. Life there was unspoiled and the people innocently pure, just the kind of thing an old man reviewing his own life lived in a time of personally shattering upheaval might wistfully regret having missed.

The painting opens on a low-keyed note of lyrical elegance suggestive of the peaceful spirit of the valley soon to be uncovered as the observer unrolls the scroll further. Languidly drifting clouds, sketched loosely with a soft, rolling brush, tie mountains and cliffs together above, much as the mallow red blossoms of the peach trees below bring the rocky banks of the foreground into satisfying relationship. Cha Shih-piao's rendering of the forms of nature always tends to be a bit casual and loose. Sparely drawn banks, outlined rapidly with a few strokes and filled in with a wash of color, usually alternate irregularly with densely painted patches where rocks cluster under a lively variation of ink tone and brush touch. Washes meant to model the side of a cliff or to provide the foundation for drawing rocks have an off-hand, streaked look about them, as though only a shifting impression mattered to the artist, while more luxuriantly built-up areas come alive under a jumble of different strokes, some dry and drawn sideways with the flat of the brush, others pulled out or curled quickly with the tip of the brush dragged and weighted from side to side. Color is encountered only rarely in Cha's works, but he uses it with such knowing effect in THE PEACH BLOSSOM SPRING that it can only be regretted that he did not turn to it more often.





## MYNAH BIRDS AND ROCKS

Chu Ta (1626-1705)

Ink on satin

6' 8½" x 1' 9¼" each. 67-4/1,2

Something of a madman in his mature years, Chu Ta gave up speaking altogether and conducted himself and his painting in truly eccentric ways. His style plays upon improbable compositions, intentional ambiguity, and expressive content so unconventional that one is never sure whether he is mocking the observer or simply symbolizing intensely personal meaning in cryptic terms. Awkwardly misshapen mynahs foil one another in enigmatic contrast, one perched precariously at the end of a stick-like leg, the other withdrawn into a contracted posture. There is no regular spatial depth to these pictures, only ambiguous placement and scale. Calculated confusion is enhanced by using the same brushwork for both tree branch and rocks, a brushwork rich in textural effects of a dragged and twisted brush unevenly inked.





Kung Hsien (1617/18-1689)

Above

**CLOUDY PEAKS (handscroll detail)**

Inscription by the artist dated 1674

Ink on paper. 26' 11½" long, 6⅝" high. 68-29

Below

**LANDSCAPE IN THE MANNER OF TUNG YÜAN (handscroll detail)**

Ink on paper. 31' 10½" long, 10½" high. 48-44

Kung Hsien has been termed an "Individualist" painter, a rubric for a group of seventeenth and eighteenth century painters allied not so much by style as by an intensely personal vision of inescapable forcefulness. Like other "Individualists", Kung Hsien devoted himself to the development and thorough exploitation of a singular technique, remarkable for its narrowly circumscribed range of technical vocabulary and, in his case, for its requirement of laborious, time-consuming attention. As can be seen in these handscroll details, and in the album leaves on the opposite page, rocks and mountains are carefully built up with layers of reiterated dabs of a soft, worn brush with an eye to rich, tactile plays of velvety textures and plays of light and dark that provide interest of abstract pattern as well as model the rounded forms. Trees, too, are soft and velvety, while geometric forms of houses provide stark contrast to their environment. The expressive character of Kung Hsien's landscape is unmistakably his own. Forlorn and brooding, it combines formations recalling common experience with those of a fantasy outside this world.





Kung Hsien (1617/18-1689)

THREE LEAVES FROM AN  
ALBUM OF TEN

VILLAGE ON A  
MOUNTAINOUS LAKESHORE

Ink on paper

91½" x 17⅝". 60-36/7

Kung Hsien's inscription reads:  
"Having painted what I saw in a  
dream, a friend now says, 'The  
shores of the lakes in my native  
Chekiang frequently have spots like  
this'".



THE PEACH BLOSSOM  
STUDIO

Ink and color on paper

91½" x 17⅝". 60-36/9

Kung Hsien's inscription reads:  
"My old friend Chang Feng used  
to paint the Peach Blossom Studio.  
This grasps the essence of the man  
and uses his idiom. Doing this sort  
of thing is like adapting stanzas to  
harmony in poetry".



MOUNTAINS AND MIST-  
FILLED VALLEYS

Ink and slight color on paper

91½" x 17⅝". 60-36/5

In the inscription to the left, Kung  
Hsien says he is imitating a painting  
on silk by the Sung artist Mi Fei  
(1051-1107).







Wang Yüan-ch'i (1642-1715)

Left

THE THREE FRIENDS (Pine, Plum, and Bamboo)

Dated 1702

Ink on paper. 29½" x 16½". 51-77

Below—left

SPRING IN THE CHIANGNAN REGION,  
in the Style of Hui-Ch'ung

Painted in 1703

Ink and color on paper. 12¼" x 9¾". 62-15

Below—right

SPRINGTIME AT THE PEACH BLOSSOM FOUNT,  
in the Style of Chao Meng-Fu

Painted in 1703

Ink and color on paper. 12¼" x 9¾". 62-16

Gift of Mr. Arthur Rothwell

Wang Yüan-ch'i is one of the six "Orthodox" masters of the Ch'ing Dynasty. As the term "Orthodox" suggests, Wang's painting maintains more observable links to past traditions, does less violence to the images of nature, and is generally less pointedly expressive than the works of such artists as Kung Hsien (pp. 70, 71) and Chu Ta (p. 69).







# HAN-SHAN AND SHIH-TE

Lo P'ing (1733-1799)

Ink and slight color on paper. 30 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 20 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". 72-5

Lo P'ing was the most talented of a group of eighteenth century artists called the "Eight Eccentrics of Yangchow". The rough, loose style of this picture is based upon Ch'an (Zen) styles of the late Sung and Yüan period, and predicated upon the belief that wisdom and excellence may be clothed in rude, unconventional exteriors.



# Chinese Ceramics

The collection of Chinese ceramics, including pottery, stoneware, and porcelain, illustrates the potter's art of one people, one civilization, during a period of very nearly four thousand years, from the painted neolithic pottery of about 2000 to 1500 B.C. to the delicate, decorated porcelains that maintained a high standard well into the nineteenth century of our era.

Ceramics in China are not to be considered as merely adjuncts to decorative arts in general or as service utensils alone, but rather as a distinctive category within the arts. The art of the Chinese potter possesses qualities of creativity, diversity, technical perfection, and aesthetic worth that set it apart from the ceramics of any other culture. It is almost impossible to think of a shape, a kind of glaze, or a technique in decoration which the Chinese have not either originated or, if borrowed, exploited far beyond the limitations obtaining in its country of origin.

In the third and second millennium B.C. there flourished a widespread neolithic culture rich in pottery with marked regional differences from the boldly painted vessels found in Kansu and Honan of the Yang-shao culture to the incredibly thin black polished ware of the Lung-shan culture in Shantung to the east. About 1200 B.C., during the Shang Dynasty, there was made, among other wares, a high-fired porcelainous stoneware with traces, probably fortuitous, of ash glaze. By the fifth to third century B.C., in the Period of the Warring States, there were fully glazed pottery wares, as attested by the well-known covered jar in the Gallery. During the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-220 A.D.) the constantly growing demand for cheap pottery imitations to be buried in the tombs as substitutes for far more valuable bronze and lacquer vessels must have been a great stimulus to the ceramic industries.

The amount of skill and the degree of genius for abstracting the essential nature of a subject that are manifest in the best tomb figures are all the more amazing when it is considered these pieces were intended for burial alone and never to be enjoyed by the living.

It is impossible here even to mention the leading wares, but some attempt to do so will be made in the captions of the selected pieces illustrated. It is generally conceded that the perfection of the stoneware and porcelainous ceramics came about in the Northern Sung Dynasty (960-1127) and the succeeding Southern Sung (1127-1279). During these centuries not only the ordinary commercial wares such as the decorated *T'zu-chou* group or the more elegant products of the kilns at Ting-chou in Hopei produced pieces of supreme quality, but such aristocratic wares as *Ju*, *Kuan*, and the so-called *Chang Lung-ch'üan* attained a perfection in shapes and glazes that set the standard for all time.

The fourteenth century saw the beginnings of high-fired porcelains with underglaze decoration in copper red and cobalt blue. While the red was sparsely employed because of difficulties in its control, there rapidly developed, especially through the fifteenth century of the Ming Dynasty, decoration in underglaze blue—resulting in the most famous of all Chinese porcelains, the blue-and-white that was exported throughout the known world. Small cups, plates, and bowls, with polychrome decoration employing overglaze enamels of yellow, green, red, and lavender combined with underglaze blue, devised during the Ming reign of Ch'eng-hua (1465-1487), are among the most prized of high-fired porcelains.

The city of Ching-te Chen in Chekiang province became the center of porcelain manufacture from the fourteenth century on. Here were made not only the finest porcelains ordered by the imperial court, but vast quantities of commercial pieces, of which thousands were exported. Blue-and-white found its way to southeast Asia, the Near East, and Europe as early as the fifteenth century, and of the polychrome decorated porcelains, those best known in Europe were the *famille verte*, with overglaze green enamels of the K'ang-hsi reign (1662-1722), and the *famille rose*, employing a rose-pink enamel made during the reigns of Yung-cheng (1723-1735) and Ch'ien-lung (1736-1795).

LS



## JAR

Neolithic, Yang-shao Culture (about 2000-1500 B.C.)  
Painted pottery. 12¼" high. 53-8



## COVERED JAR, TYPE *Hu*

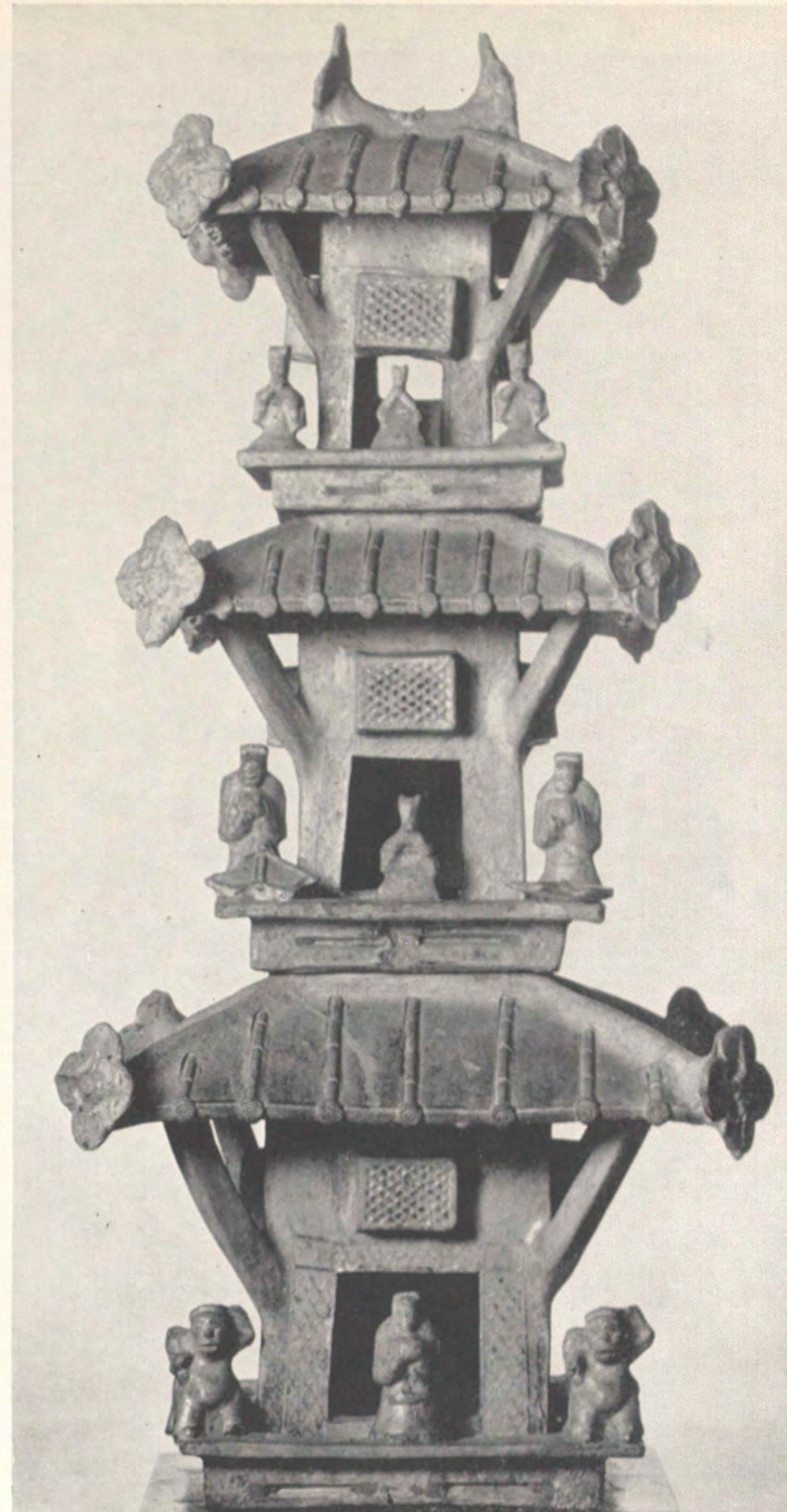
Late Eastern Chou, 5th-3rd century B.C.

Pottery with brown glaze. 7¾" high. 34-254





Above—left  
**SMALL HOUSE**  
 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high. 34-204



Above—right  
**THREE-STORIED TOWER**  
 34 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high. 34-206

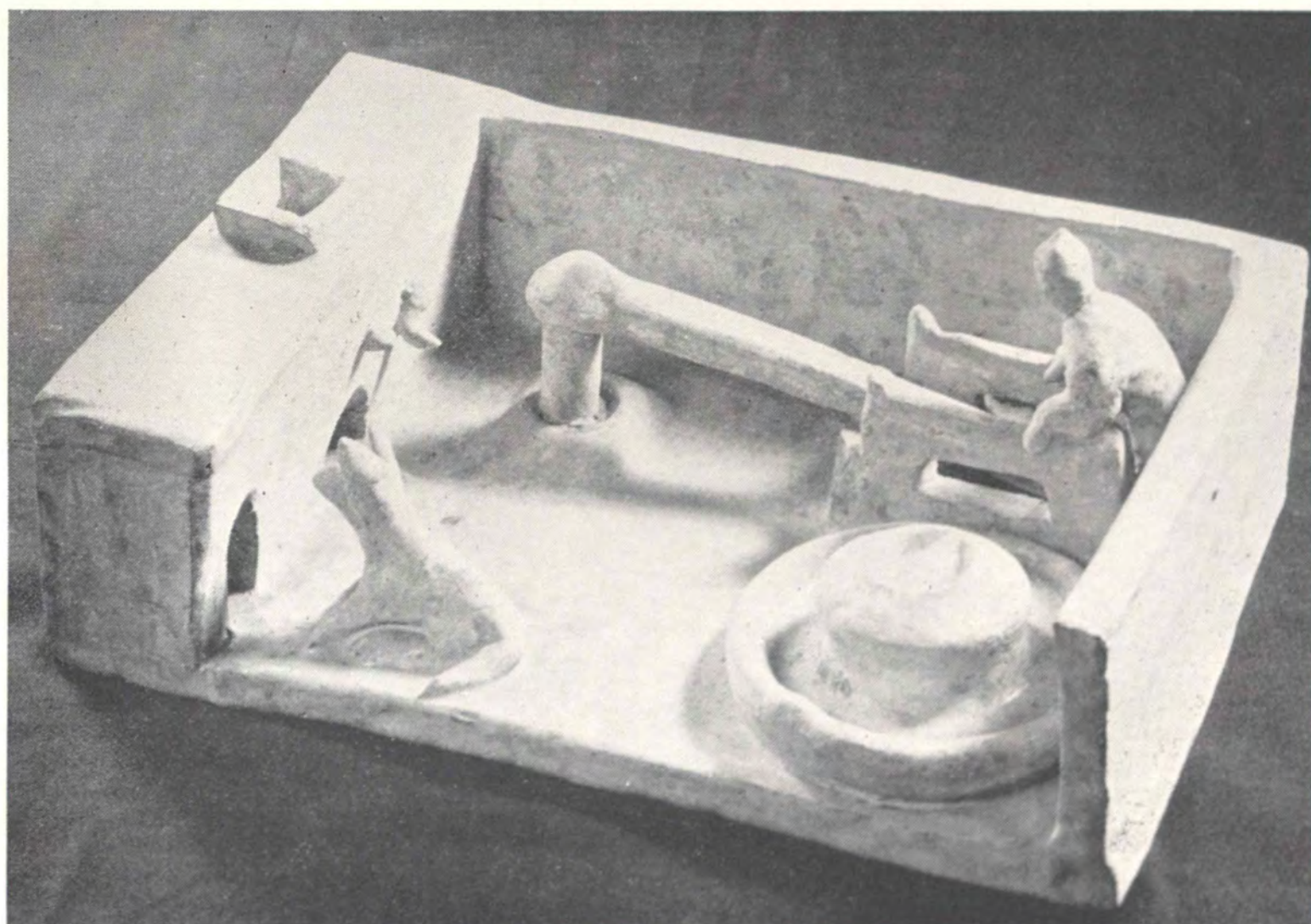
Below—left  
**FARM YARD WITH HUSKER,  
 WINNOWING MACHINE,  
 AND GRINDER**  
 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 6". 34-207

Below—right  
**MAN PLAYING THE  
 GAME *Liu-Po***  
 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high. 34-148/5

Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220)

Pottery with green glaze turned iridescent from burial.

All four pieces illustrated are from a group of twenty-two in the collection that come from one tomb at Shan-chou in northwest Honan Province.







Left

### JAR WITH LID, TYPE *Hu*

Western Han (206 B.C.-24 A.D.)

2nd century B.C.

Painted pottery. 24" high. 32-49

This is a characteristic "substitution" object made for burial only, in which a valuable jar of lacquered wood, probably with gilt-bronze fittings, has been imitated in clay. The painting follows closely a well-known lacquer style but is done in water-color that would not withstand practical use.

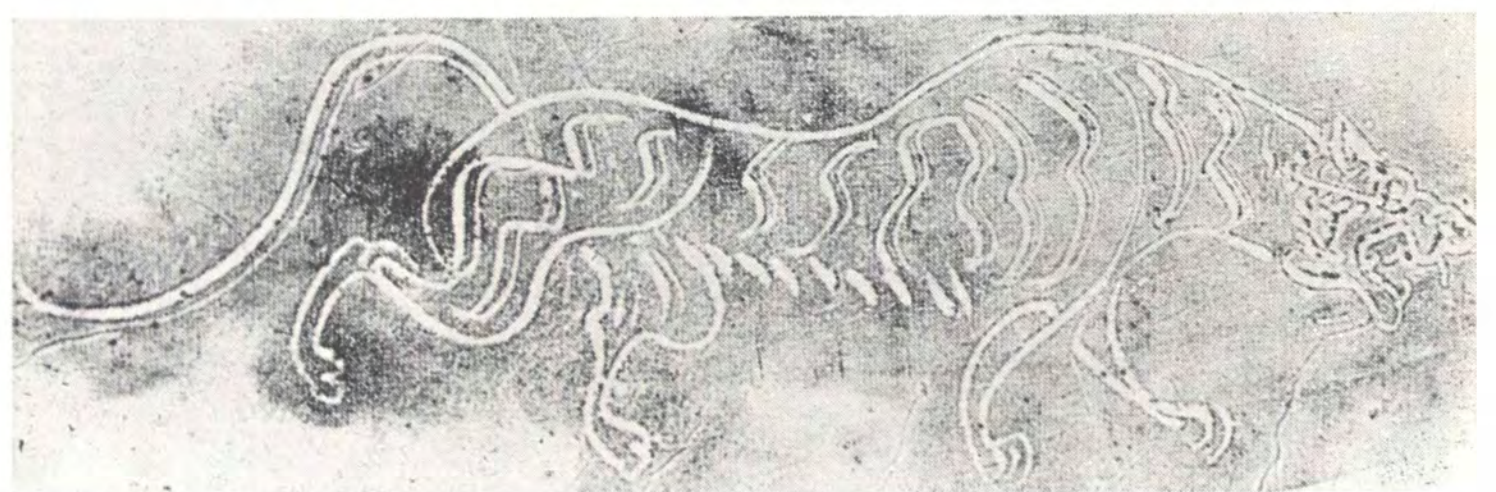
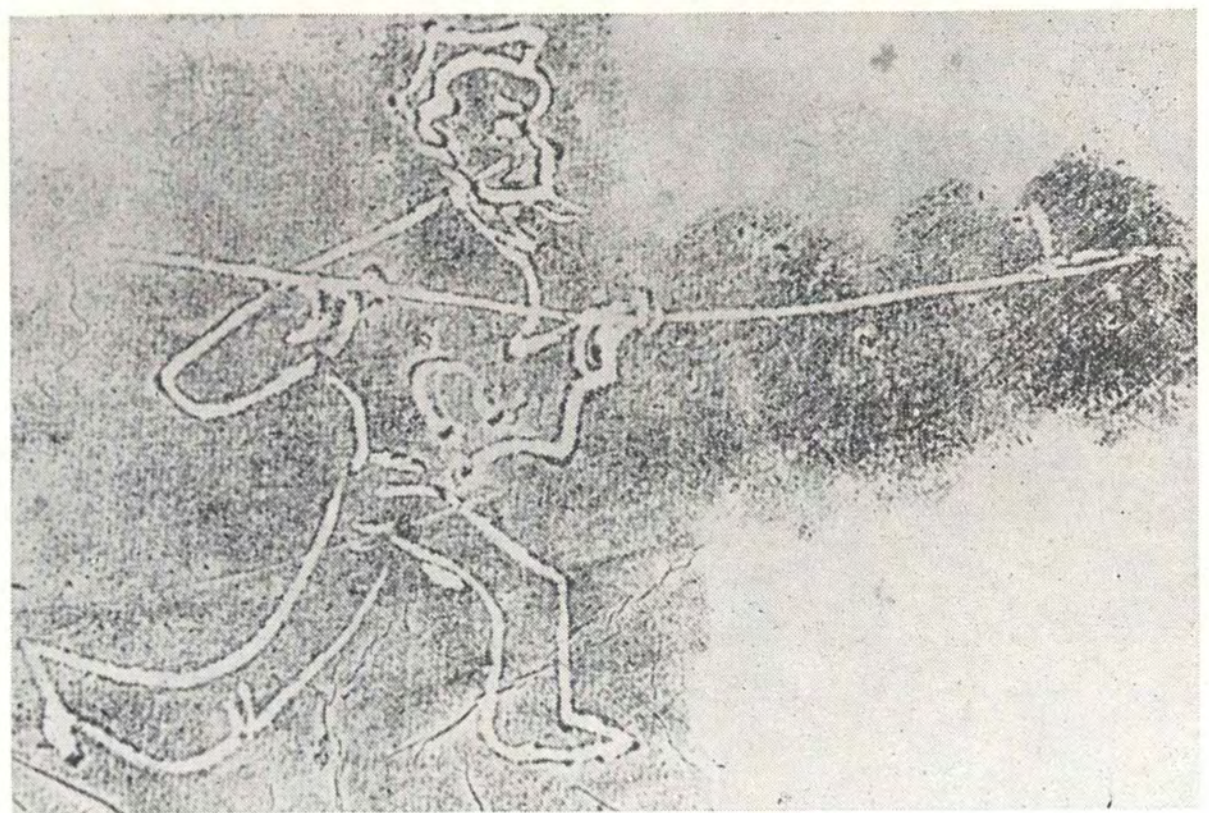
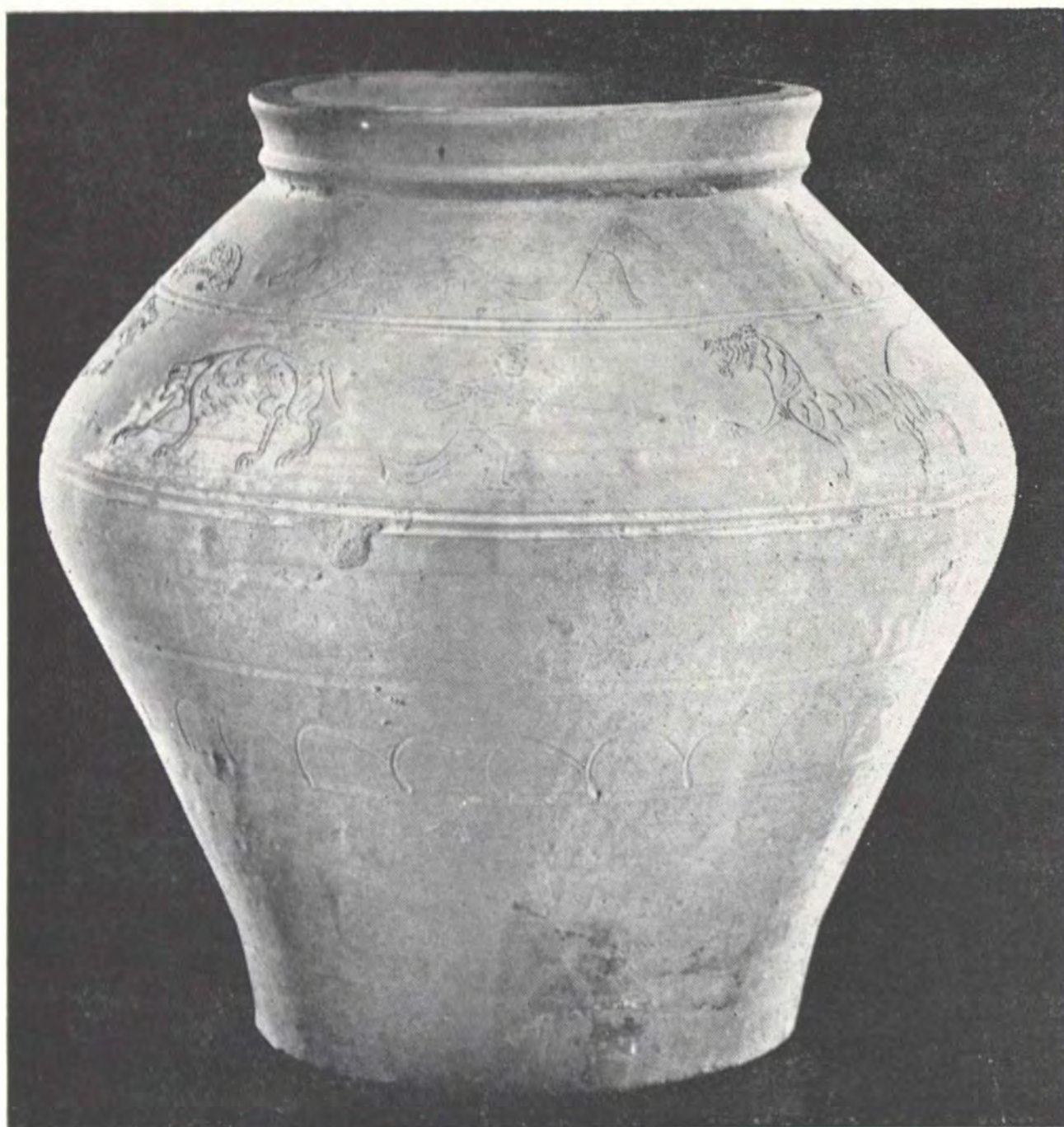
Below—left

### LARGE JAR

Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220)

Pottery with engraved designs. 17" high. 32-13

The fine light gray pottery of this jar is sufficiently high-fired to make it of practical use as a storage jar for either grain or liquids, and it may not have been intended for burial only. The direct and very fresh drawings of tigers, a monkey, hares, hounds, and a single hunter that ornament the shoulder are done with a stylus in the half-dry clay before firing. The extraordinary animation that is the hallmark of Han drawing is evident in the stalking tiger with his powerful shoulder and lean flank and in the intrepid hunter, armed with a lance of the type *ko*, who moves forward with commendable caution (see paper rubbings below).





Right

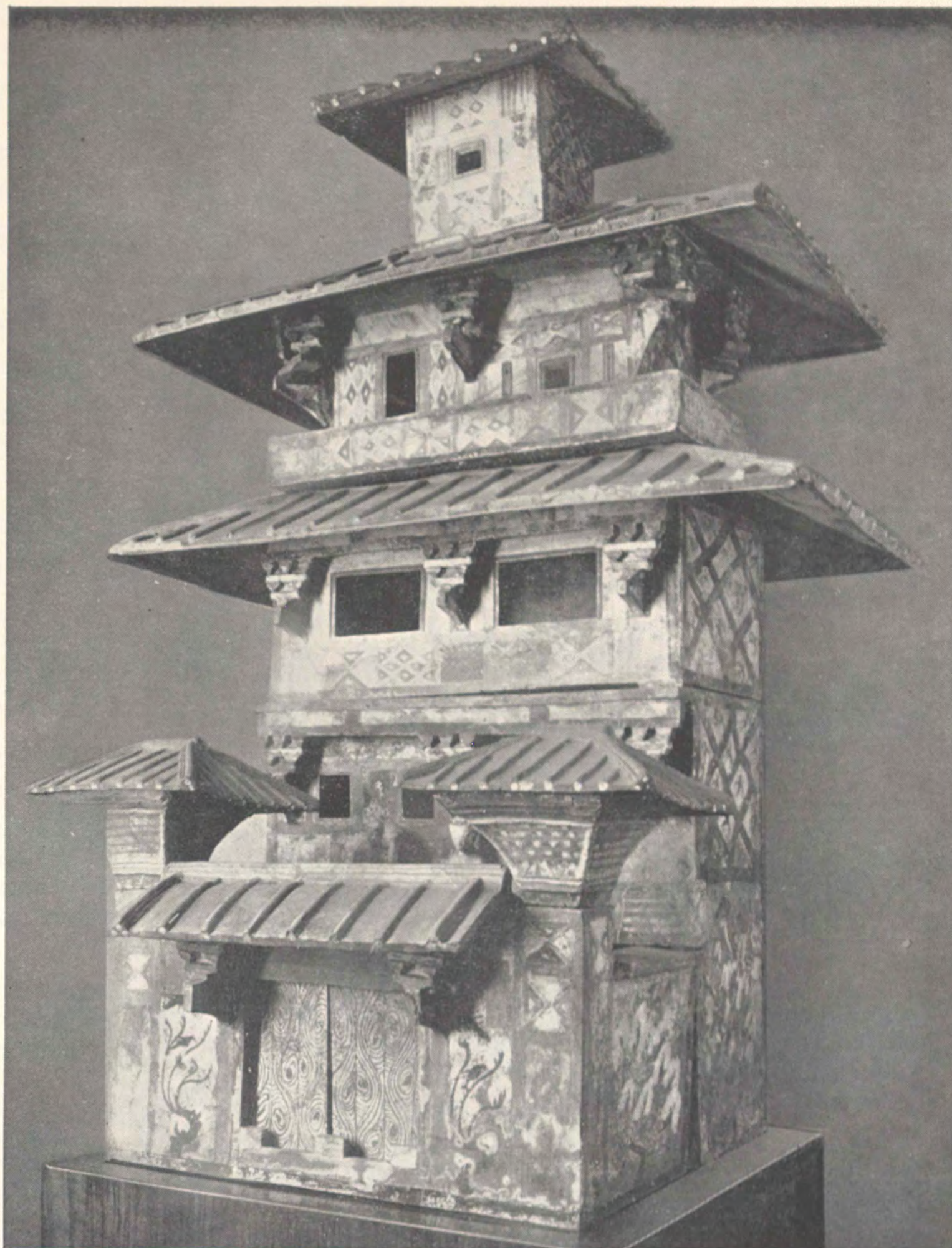
### MODEL OF A MULTI-STORIED HOUSE

Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220)

1st century A.D.

Painted pottery. 4' 4" high. 33-521

One of the largest and most complete house models known, the structure is of interest for the bracket system supporting the broad eaves and for the elaborate painting that includes trees surrounding the ground floor, with crows perched in the branches of those on either side of the door. The ground floor was probably used for the protection of livestock at night, with dwelling quarters on the floors above and the whole surmounted by a watch-tower.



Below—left

### JAR WITH LID

Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-24 A.D.)

2nd-1st century B.C.

Painted pottery. 9 7/8" high. 35-125/1

One of a set of three similar jars and one other somewhat smaller, this piece is decorated with a phoenix, boldly and swiftly drawn in black and vermilion. Others in the set show a dancing bear-like creature, a galloping ox, and human figures.

Below—right

### TRAY

Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220)

Probably 2nd century

Painted pottery. 15" diameter. 34-218

The figures, birds, and animals are painted in black and vermilion on a white ground. The style of the figures is related to certain engraved funerary stones datable to around the middle of the second century.







Left

### GUARDIAN WARRIOR

Western Chin Dynasty (265-313)

Late 3rd-4th century

Pottery with traces of pigment

13¼" high. 33-555

As a protector of the tomb, the figure probably originally held a wooden lance.



Right

### SOLDIER IN ARMOR

Northern Ch'i Dynasty (550-577)

Painted pottery. 12¼" high. 43-7

Gift in Memory of Lt. Harrell H. Rule

The curling red beard and pointed nose are non-Chinese features. Turkic, Tartar, and numerous other non-Chinese racial types are represented among the tomb figures of the sixth and seventh centuries.



### TWO MEN BEARING A DRUM

Northern Wei Dynasty (386-535)

Early 6th century

Painted pottery. 12" high. 32-186/7

In addition to this pair there are six more figures in the group, five equipped with small drums and wind instruments, and the band leader, carrying a fly-whisk.



### ACROBAT OR WRESTLER (one of a pair)

Late Northern Wei (386-535) to Western Wei (535-554)

First half 6th century

Painted pottery. 9½" high. 34-45/1



Right

VASE

Second half of the 6th century

Glazed stoneware. 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high. 72-30

The body of the vessel is a fine-grained light gray clay. The thin, rather glassy glaze is a pale olive green, relating the piece to a large family grouped under the name of Yüeh ware.

Below—left

VASE

Late 6th-7th century

Glazed stoneware. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high. 32-48/1

The body is a slightly buff white covered with a neutral glaze with a greenish tint in places where it gathers. The remarkably pure and elegant shape and the splayed foot are characteristic.

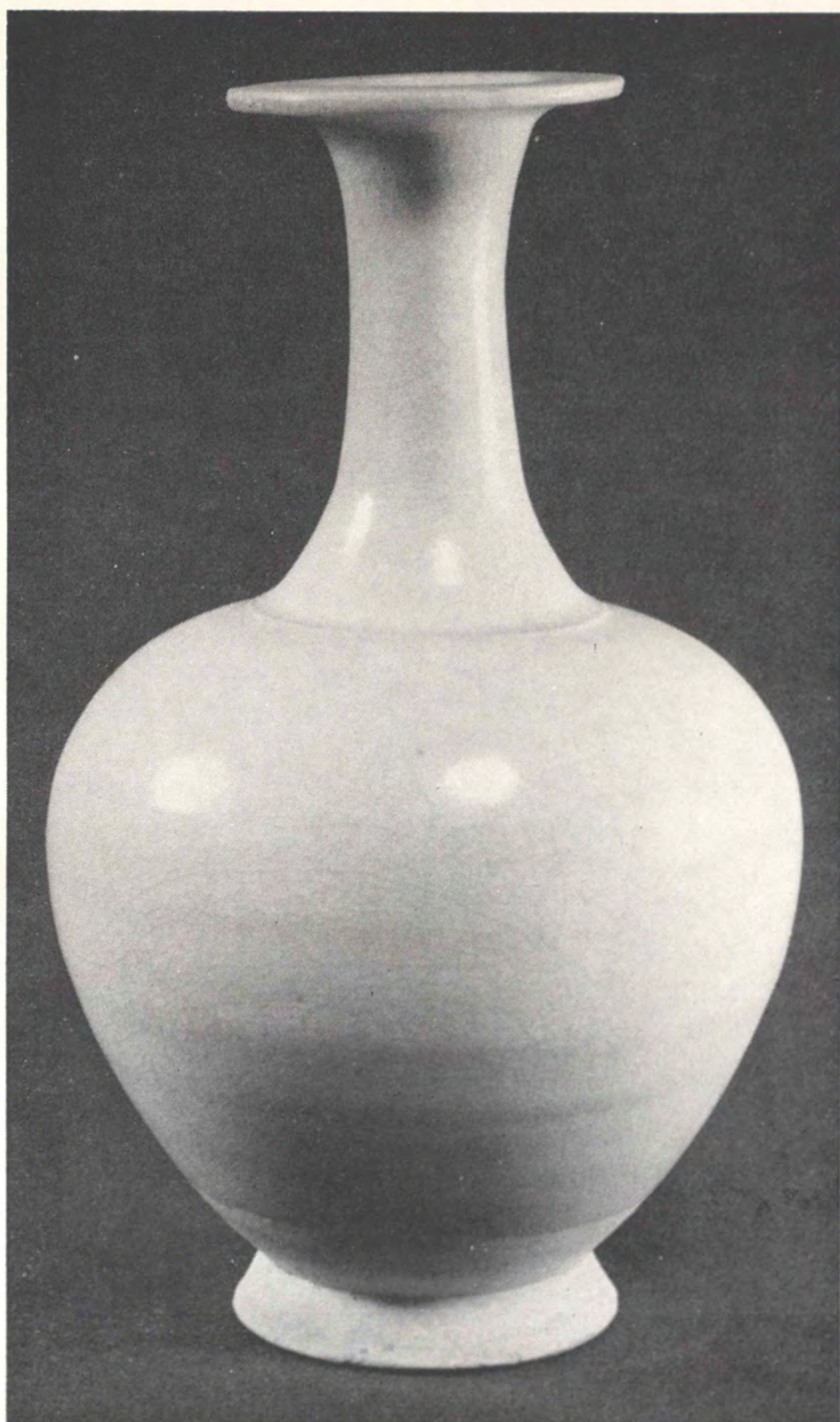
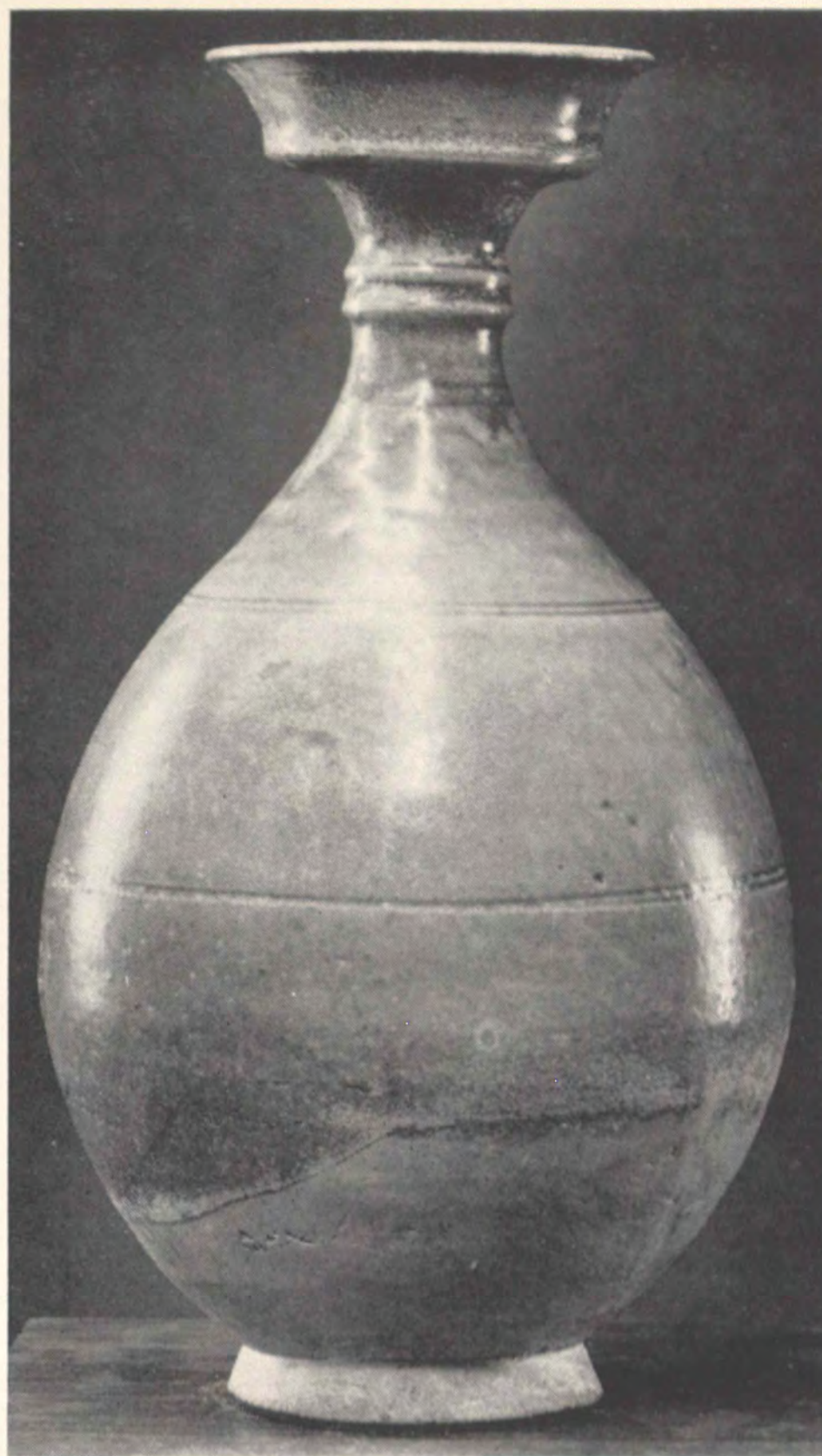
Below—right

VASE

Northern Ch'i Dynasty (550-577)

Glazed stoneware. 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high. 40-3/3

This remarkable vase covered with appliqué ornament of lotus petals, demons, roundels, trees, and pendant streamers displays a strong influence from Persia of the Sasanian period. The whole has something of the character of a metal vessel with repoussé decoration. The body is dark buff in color covered with an olive green glaze. This vase, like the one above, relates to the Yüeh ware group.



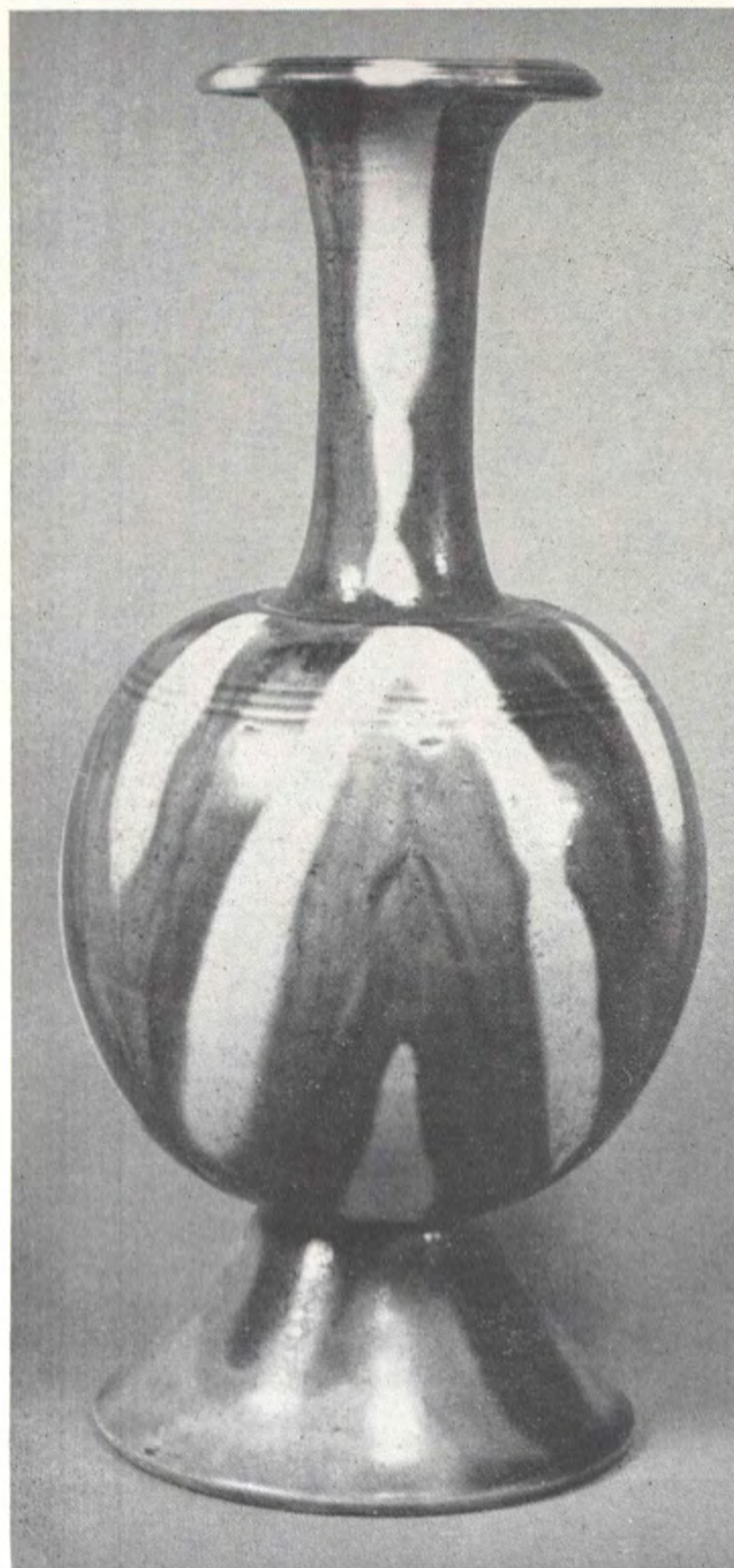




All four examples here date from the T'ang Dynasty (618-906), probably from the late 7th to 8th century. The type is called "three-color" from the palette of white, yellow, and green, and more rarely white, yellow, and blue as on the large jar, lower right. There is reason to believe these brightly colored ceramics were for funerary use only.

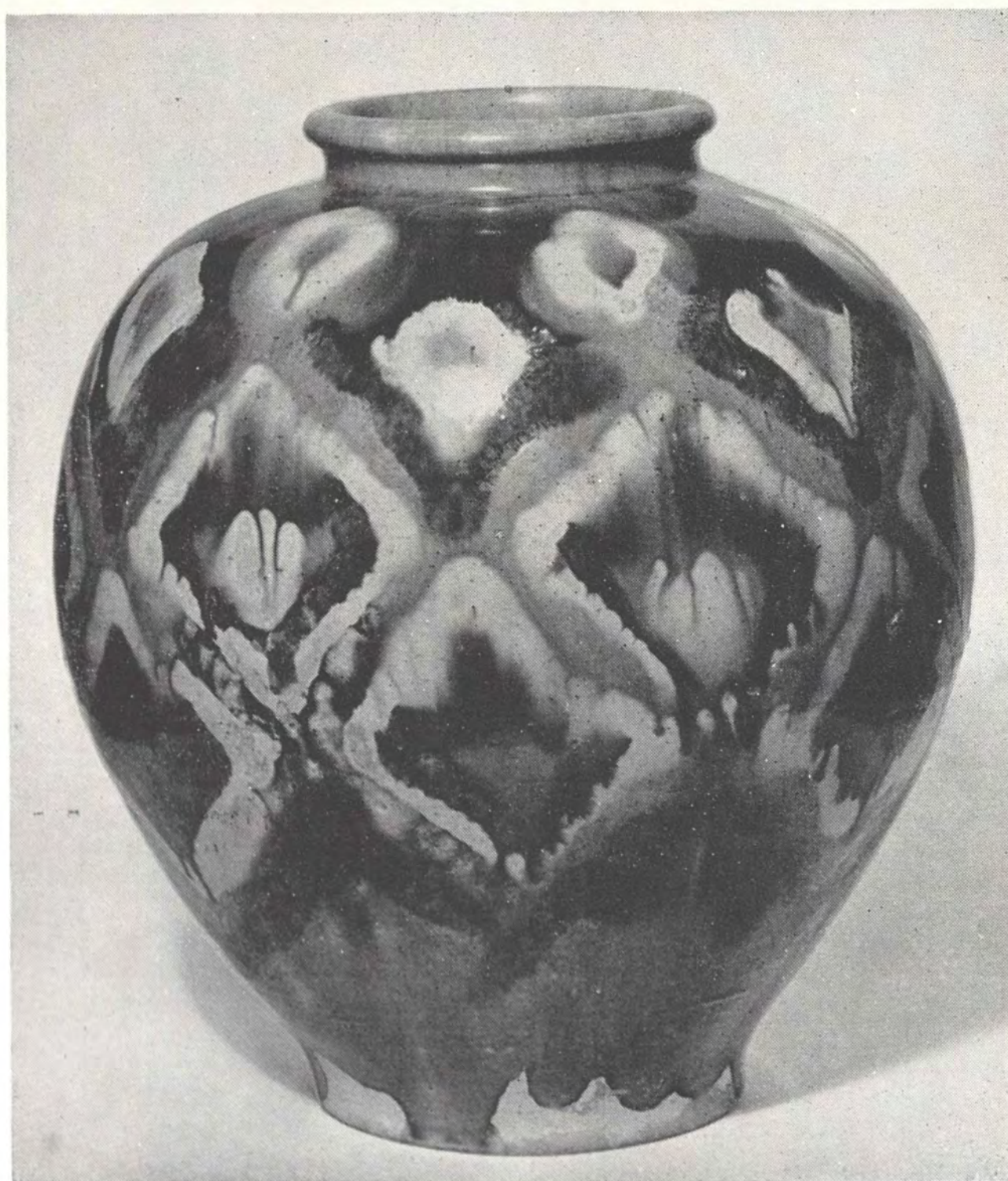
Above—left  
INCENSE BURNER  
7" high. 34-160

Above—right  
TRAY WITH FOOTED DISH  
AND NINE WINE CUPS  
9 $\frac{5}{8}$ " diameter. 72-1



Below—left  
BOTTLE  
8 $\frac{7}{8}$ " high. 55-47

Below—right  
JAR  
12" high. 52-19





Tomb figurines of the T'ang Dynasty (618-906), dating from the 7th and 8th centuries.

Right

# LADIES PLAYING POLO

Painted pottery  
10" x 3" (average). 48-31/1-4

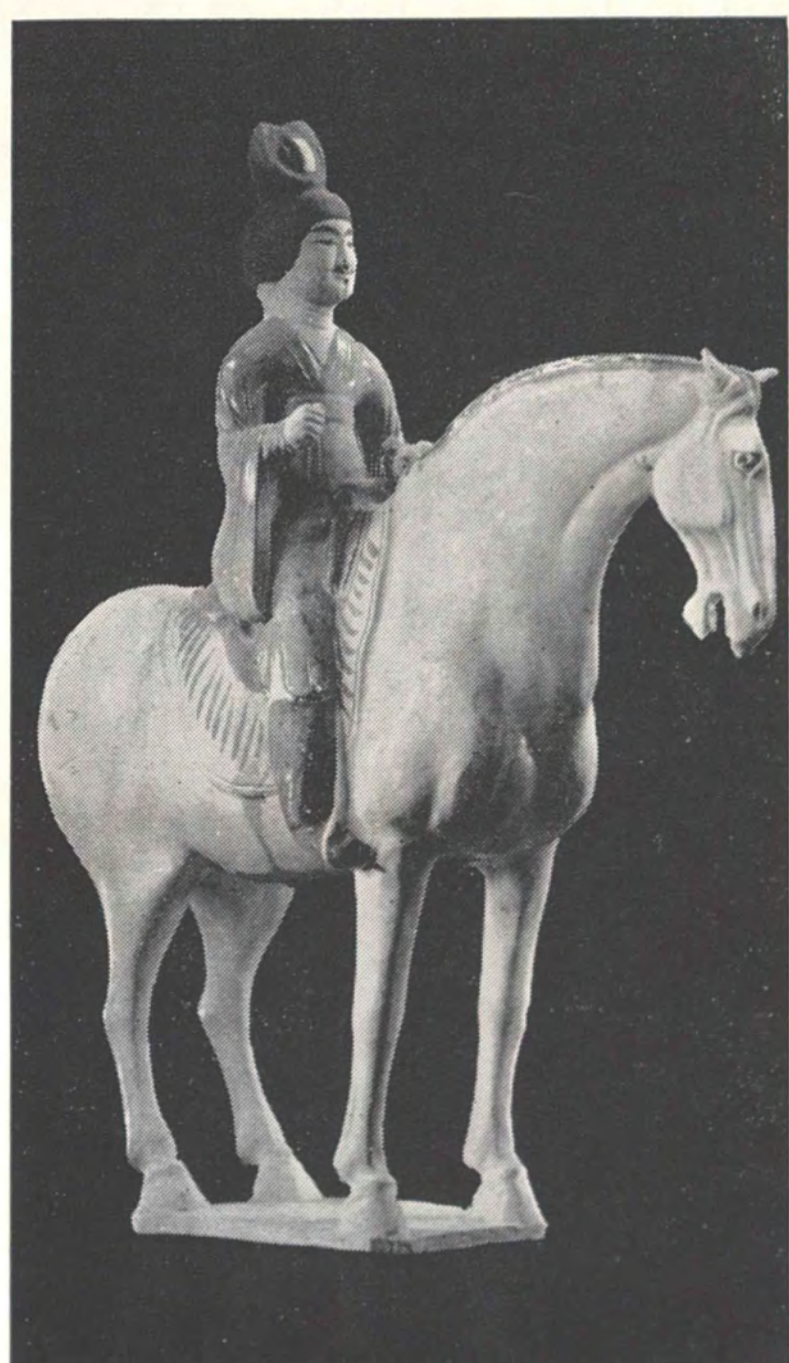
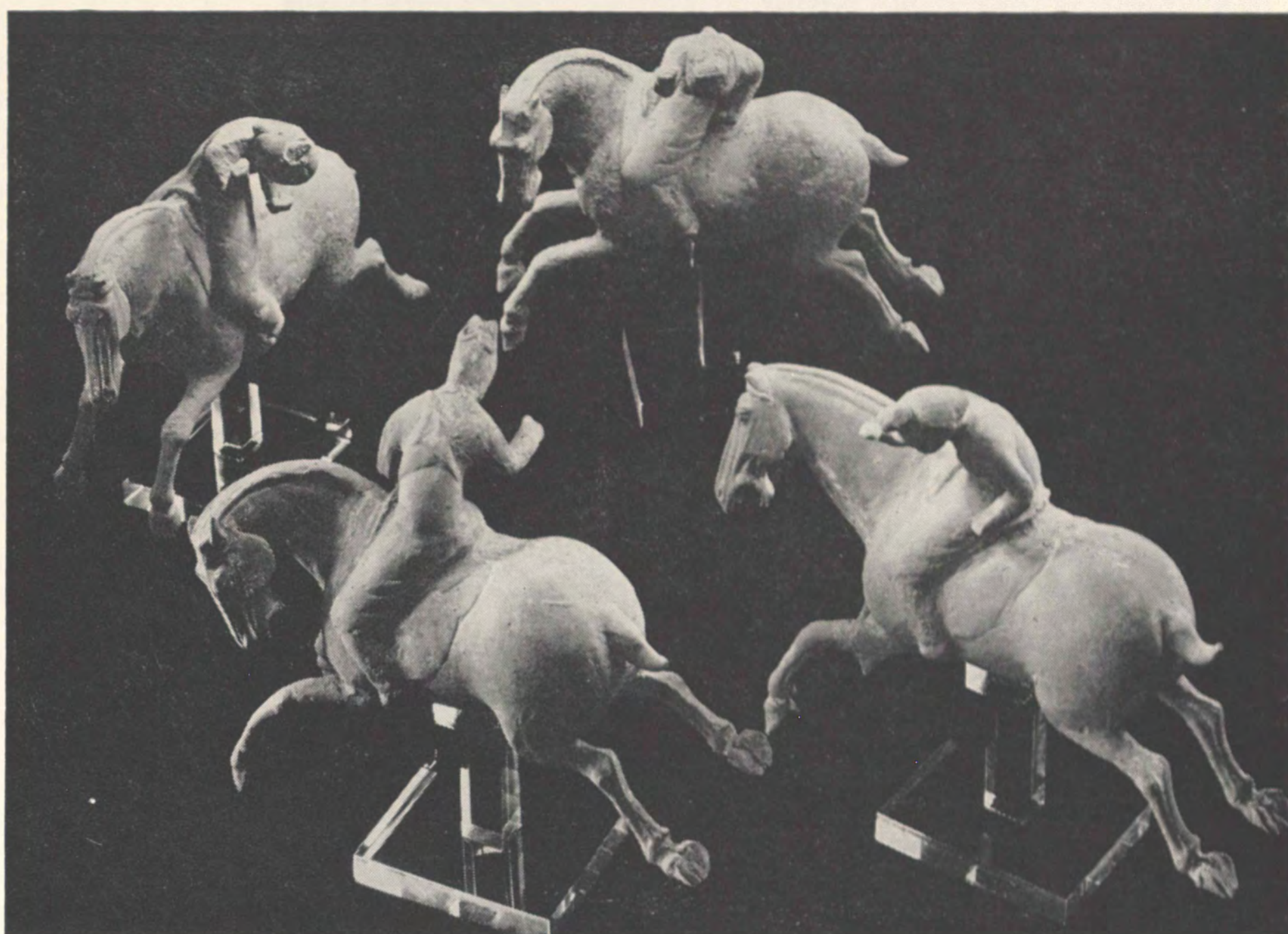
Below—left and right

# EQUESTRIAN FIGURES

Pottery with three-color glaze  
15" high. 49-22/1,2

# LADY OF QUALITY WITH PARROT, DOG, AND CHILD

Pottery with three-color glaze  
15¾" high. 39-27







The famous Silk Road, by which Chinese silks reached the Near East, Byzantium, and Europe, led from the northwest frontiers, along the edge of the Gobi desert to Samarkand, to Persia, and so to the countries farther west. Two main roads, a southern and a northern route, skirted the Tarim Basin, passing through the oasis cities of Central Asia. Much of the Silk Road lay through trackless desert wastes and many months were consumed in the journey. This silk trade, so important to the Chinese economy, was only made possible by the durability and virtues of the Bactrian camel. The camel, then, often accompanied by his Central Asian driver, became a symbol of material wealth and a popular subject for tomb figures from the sixth century on through the T'ang Dynasty.

#### CAMEL AND RIDER

7th century

Painted red pottery. 15½" high. 54-65

Gift in memory of Mrs. M. R. Sickman

#### CAMEL

6th century

Gray pottery with white paint. 9¼" high. 59-63

Gift of Mr. Earle Grant



#### LOADED CAMEL

6th century

Red pottery with traces of paint

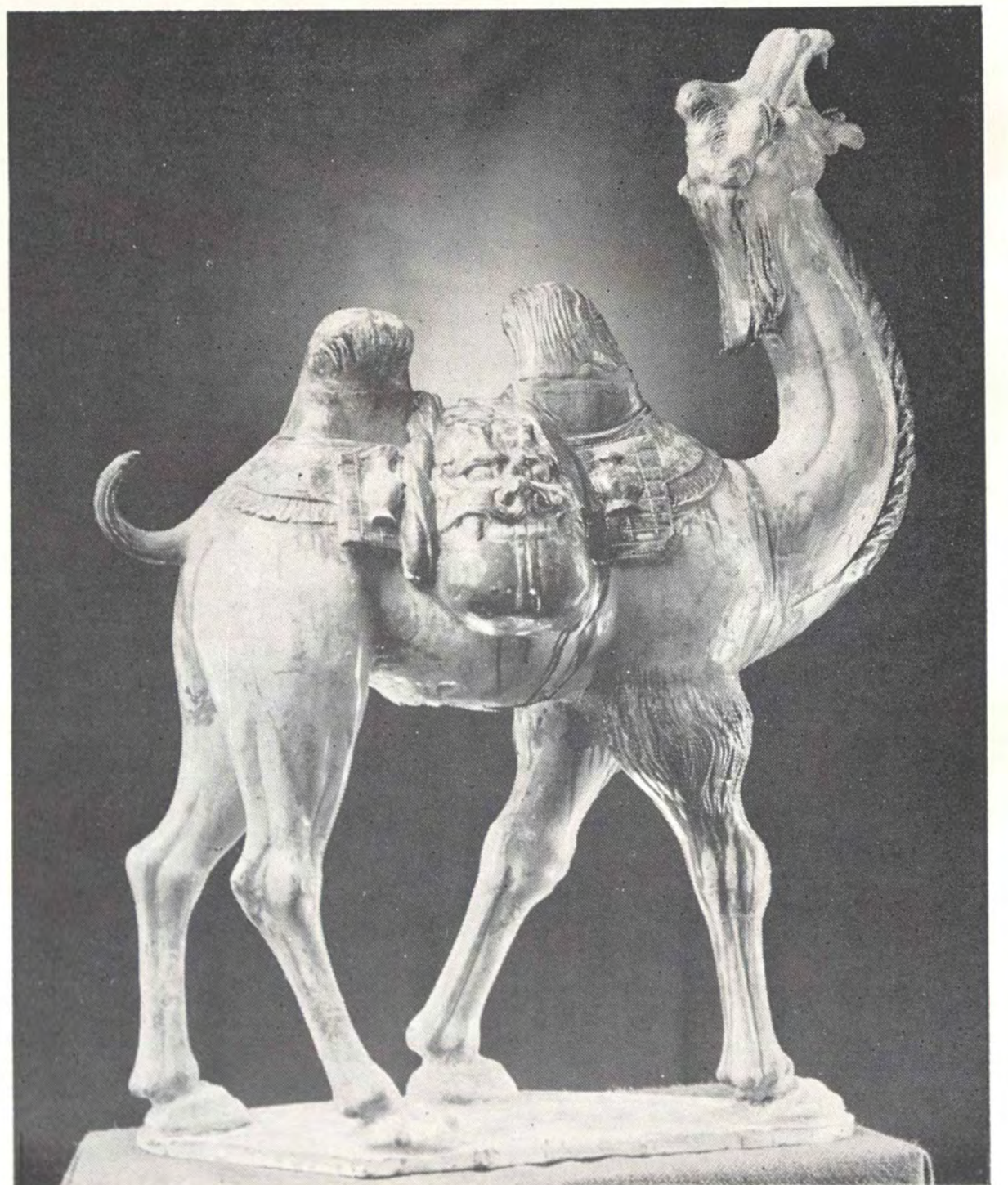
10½" high. 31-136/10

Below—right

#### LOADED CAMEL

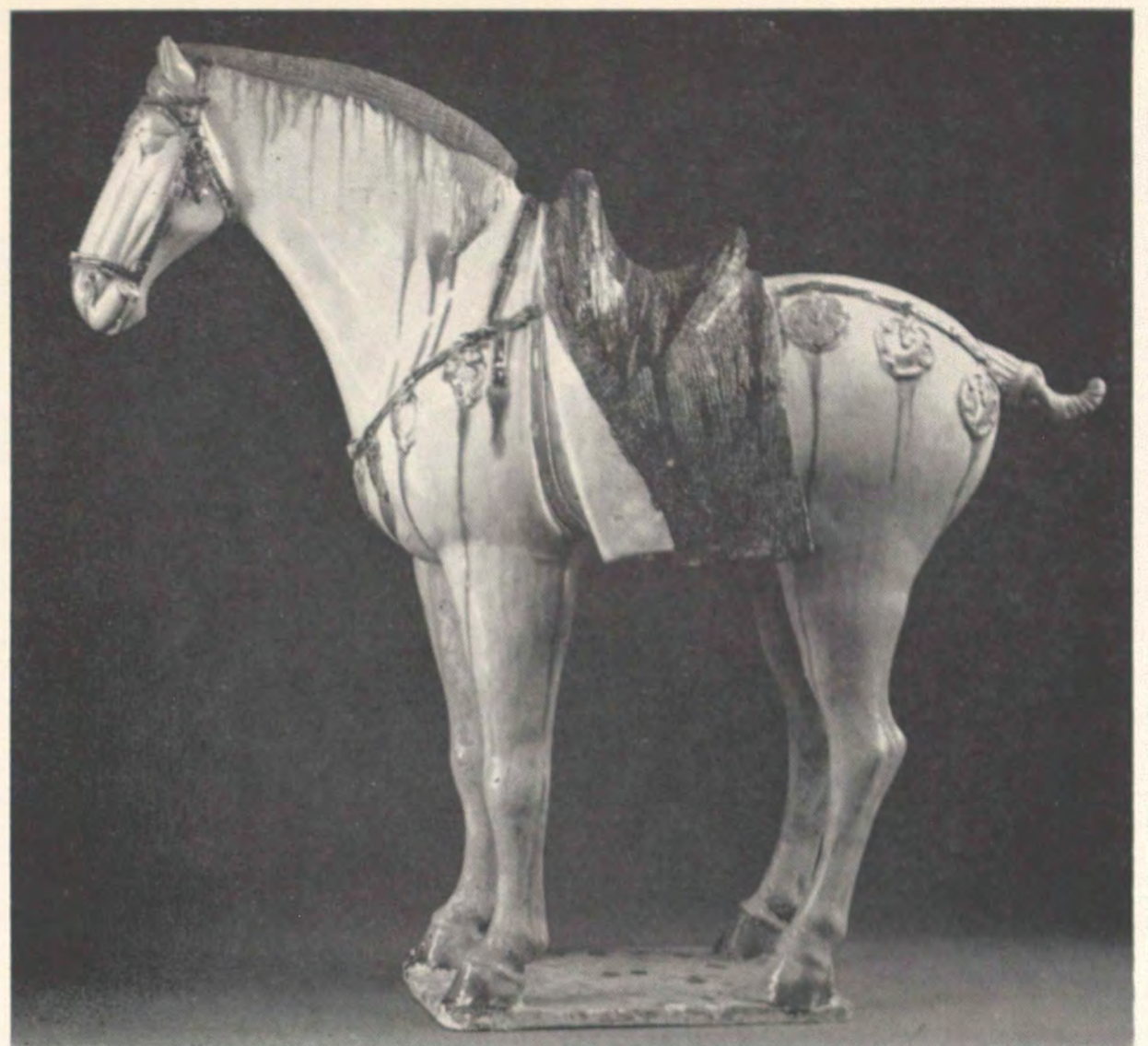
8th century

Pottery with "three-color" glaze. 34" high. 42-12





Within the wide variety of ceramic sculpture made for burial in the tombs, the horses deservedly enjoy the greatest fame. From as early as the first few centuries before the Christian era, fine horses had been eagerly sought after by the Chinese. These horses came from nomadic horsebreeders of western Asia in the region of Ferghana, north of the Pamirs, and others from as far to the west as Samarkand. Swift cavalry horses were urgently needed for military operations against the nomad peoples who frequently invaded and constantly threatened the western and northern borders of the empire. Such spirited saddle horses must also have been a mark of prestige, power, and wealth, which accounts for the quantities of pottery horses recovered from tombs. The largest, most elaborate, and in many ways the most beautiful of these effigies were made during the great T'ang Dynasty, specifically in the eighth century.



### SADDLE HORSE

T'ang Dynasty (618-906)

8th century

Glazed pottery. 23" high. 51-52

The body is cream-white, the mane yellow and the saddle-cloth a brilliant blue.



### SADDLE HORSE

T'ang Dynasty (618-906)

8th century

Glazed pottery. 29½" high. 31-79

Little attempt was made to control the flow of the glaze, and often, as here, in the cream-white mane the color has run. The body is a deep brown and the saddle-cloth a rich green.



### SADDLE HORSE

T'ang Dynasty (618-906)

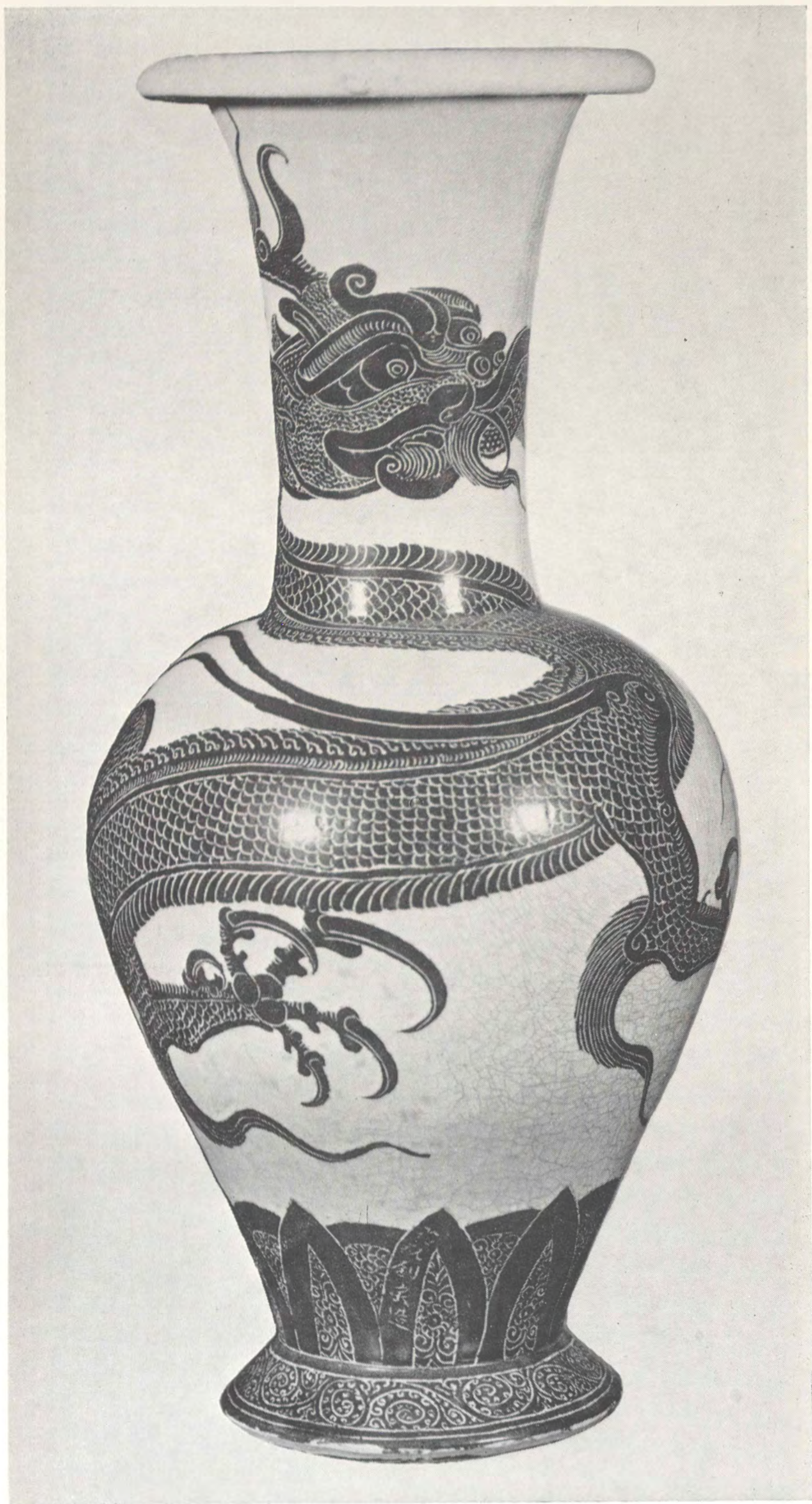
8th century

Glazed pottery. 27" high. 32-67

Gift of Mr. S. Yamanaka

This neighing horse is a strong yellow color, the mane and shaggy saddle-cloth are brown, and the trappings white and green. A very similar horse was recovered from the tomb of Prince I-te, datable to the first decade of the eighth century.





### FLOWER VASE

Northern Sung Dynasty (960-1127)

12th century

Decorated stoneware of the *Tz'u-chou* type

22 $\frac{3}{8}$ " high. 35-116

The decorated ceramics of the Sung Dynasty take the type name from the kilns of Tz'u-chou, Hopei Province, although wares of the same general character were produced in a number of other places. *Tz'u-chou* is a heavily potted, sturdy buff stoneware, covered with a white slip which at times stops short of the foot. The decoration can be painted in black on the slip and the whole covered with a neutral glaze, or the design cut through the slip revealing the body before glazing. In the former technique, the inner markings of the painted design are produced by the *sgraffito* method of removing areas of the painted design revealing the white slip beneath.

The noble vase decorated with a single dragon and petal-like forms above the foot was produced by this method. The piece is remarkable for its size, the boldness of the decoration, and its technical perfection. The dragon, which is shown extended in the drawing above, has been applied to the vase in such a manner that it emphasizes and complements the perfection of the vessel's shape and at the same time produces a design pattern that is completely satisfying from every angle. Age crackles on the surface, stained yellow on one side and black on the other, support the report that the piece was excavated from either Chü-lu Hsien or Ch'ing-ho Hsien, sites flooded by the Yellow River early in the twelfth century. On one of the rising petals at the base, the signature of the potter reads, *Hua-p'ing Liu Chia tsao*—"Flower vase made by the Liu Family."



Right

### BOTTLE

Northern Sung Dynasty (960-1127)

12th century

Stoneware with *Tz'u-chou*-type decoration

15¼" high. 70-3

Probably a wine jar, this piece illustrates another kind of decoration associated with the *Tz'u-chou* group. The decoration has been incised through the white slip, the background textured with contiguous punch marks, and a pale yellow pigment or clay rubbed into the surface before the whole was covered with a thin, neutral glaze. The technique derives from that of the silversmith.

Below—left

### JAR

Northern Sung Dynasty (960-1127)

12th century

Stoneware with brown-black glaze. 10½" high. 40-53

Honan Province stoneware with ribbed decoration in slip and thick brown-black glaze

Below—right

### SHALLOW PLATE

Northern Sung Dynasty (960-1127)

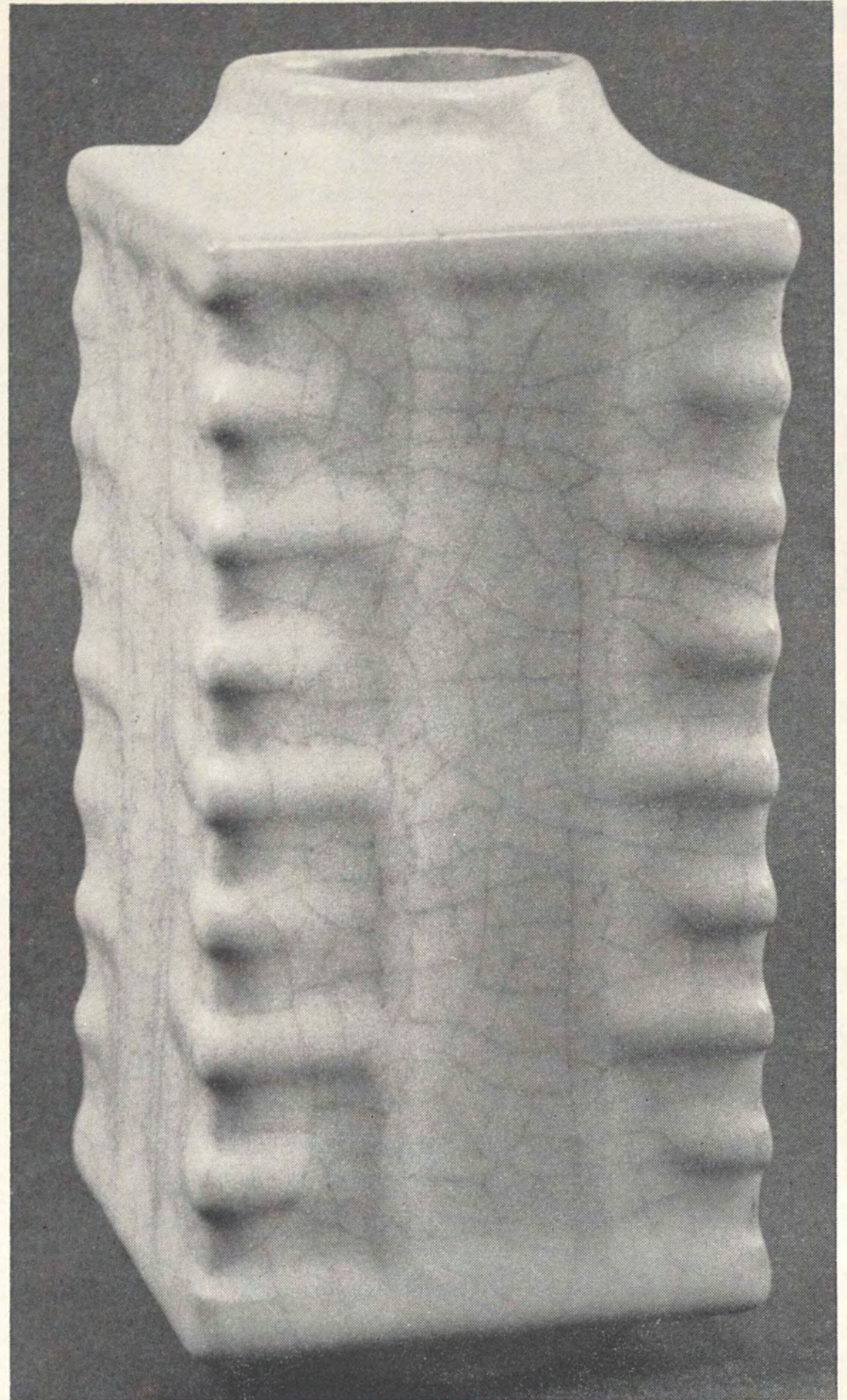
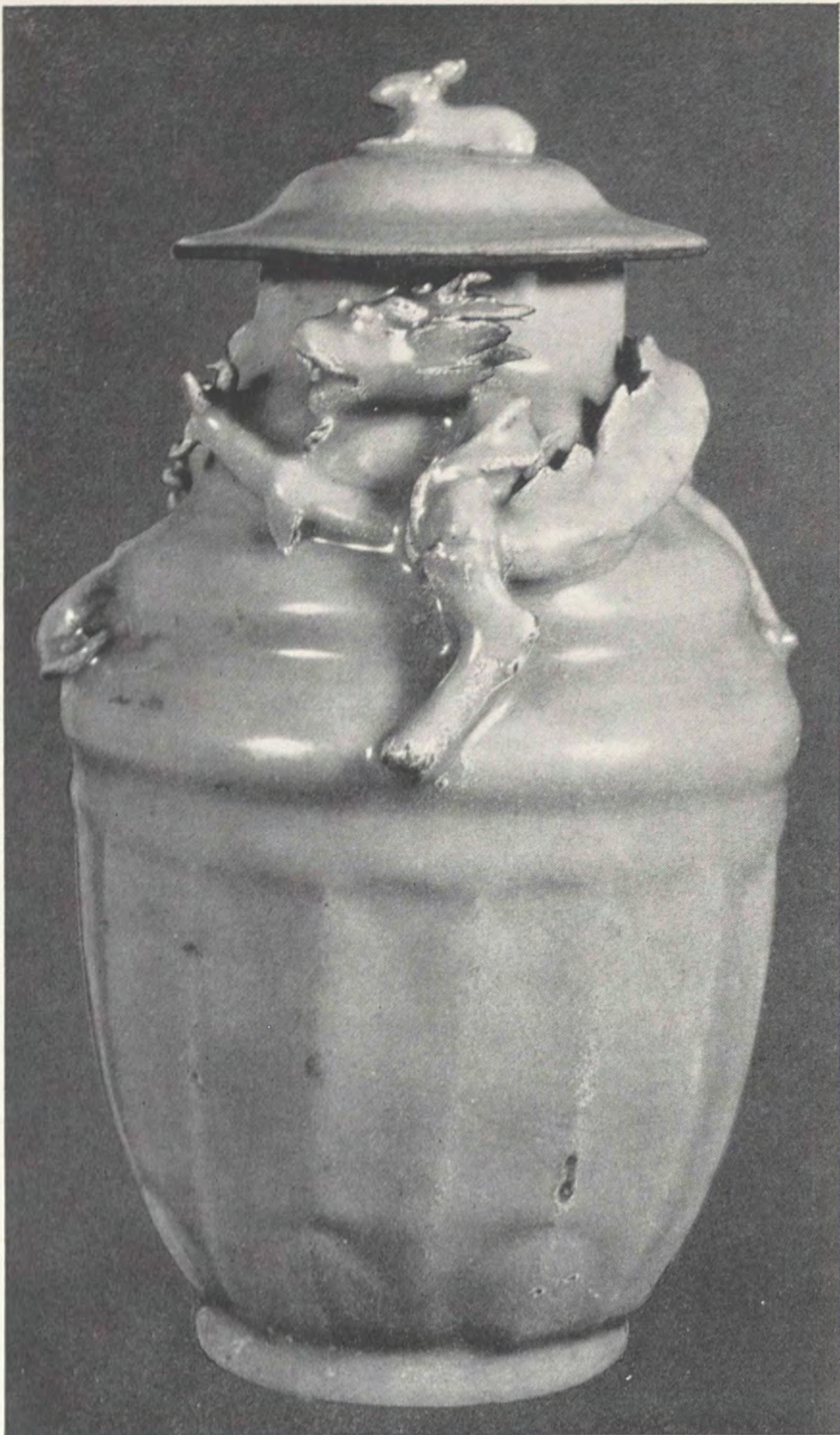
12th century

*Ting* ware with carved design. 10½" diameter. 33-7/11

One of the 'classic wares' of the Northern Sung, *Ting* ware is associated with several kiln sites in central Hopei Province. This plate is a splendid example of the best quality, in which the design is freely cut in the paste and the body covered with a warm white glaze.







Above—left

**COVERED VASE**

Southern Sung Dynasty (1127-1279)

*Lung-ch'üan* celadon ware

9 $\frac{5}{8}$ ". 33-7/21

The best celadons of the Southern Sung were made in Chekiang and are noted for the thick, unctuous glazes in various shades of green.

Above—right

**VASE**

Southern Sung Dynasty (1127-1279)

*Kuan* ware. 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high. 32-158/2

The vase is in the shape of an archaic jade ritual object called *ts'ung*. The thick glaze is light blue-gray with a characteristic fine crackle.



Left

**JAR WITH LID**

Northern Sung Dynasty (960-1127)

*Ting* ware with a brown-black glaze. 5" high. 35-99

The *ting* kilns, noted for white wares, produced black ware such as this and "red *ting*" of persimmon color.



Right

**VASE**

Liao Dynasty (907-1125)

Glazed pottery with appliqué decoration

57/8" high. 35-109

The single glaze produces a purple color over the reddish clay body, but green in the areas where the body has been covered with a white slip.



Below—left

**VASE**

Liao Dynasty (907-1125)

Porcelaneous stoneware with grayish-white glaze

16 1/4" high. 40-3/2

There is an incised character on the base which reads *Kuan*—"Official" (ware).

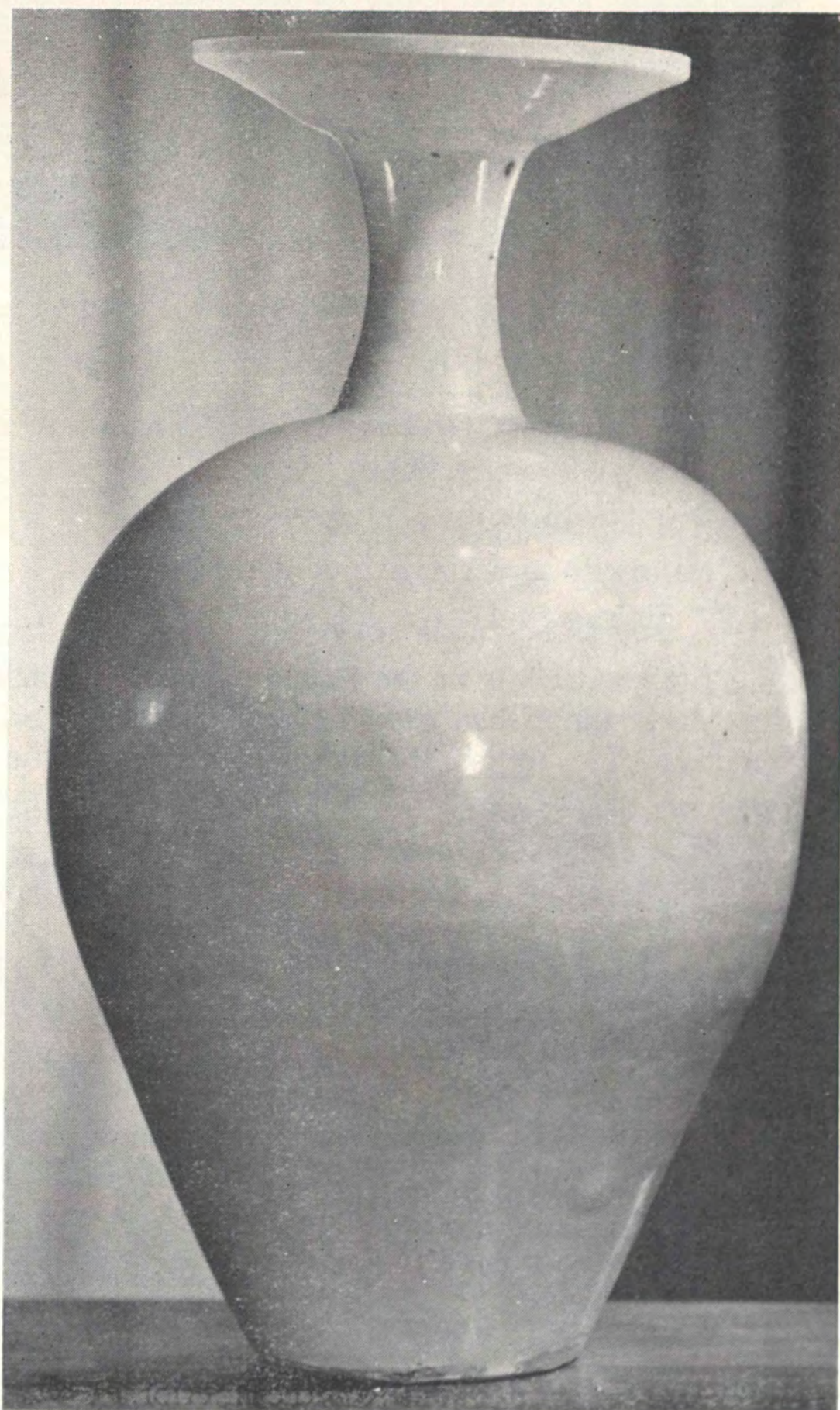
Below—right

**WATER-MOON KUAN-YIN**

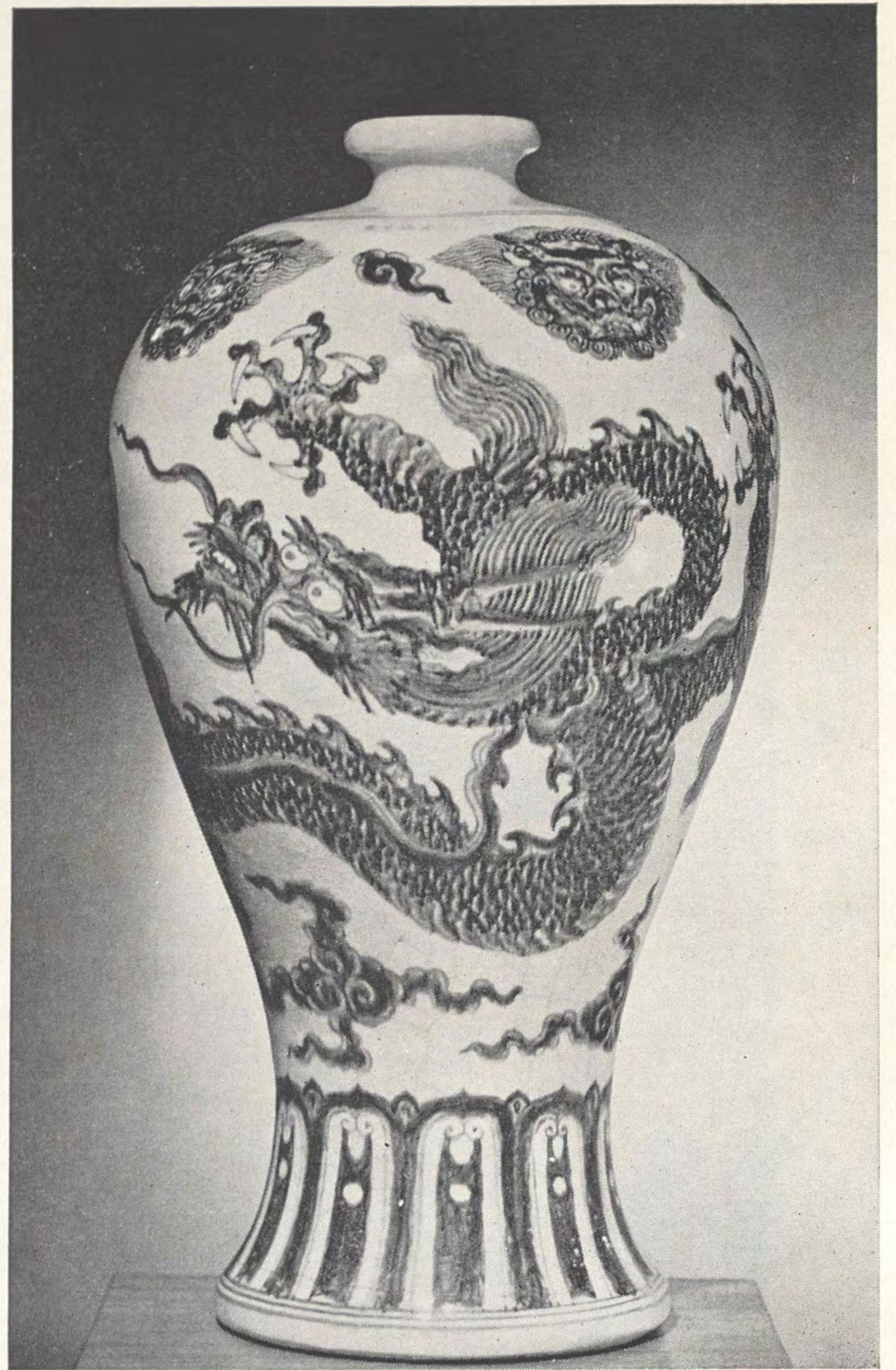
Yüan Dynasty (1279-1368)

*Ch'ing-pai* ware. 20 1/4" high. 35-5

An inscription in ink on the unglazed foot reads "*Ta-teh*, second (or third) year, eighth month", a date equivalent to 1298 or 1299.







Above

PAIR OF VASES, TYPE *Mei-P'ing*

Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)

Reign of Hsüan-te (1426-1435)

Porcelain with underglaze blue decoration

21 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high. 40-45/1,2

The blue and white of the Hsüan-te era is especially famous for the accomplished drawing and depth and brilliance of the blue. The four-character reign mark is on the shoulder.



Left

TAZZA CUP

Late Yüan (1279-1368) to  
early Ming Dynasty  
(1368-1644)

14th century

Porcelain with blue interior  
and brown-black exterior

4 $\frac{5}{8}$ " high. 35-533

A very rare type, the cup has  
a design of slightly raised  
dragons and incised clouds in  
the interior.







Above—left

#### VASE

Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)

15th century

Porcelain with enamel decoration of the *fa-hua* type. 17 $\frac{5}{8}$ " high. 33-353

The decoration is in green, yellow, turquoise blue, and white on a deep aubergine blue ground. Each element of the design is outlined with a thread of clay.

Above—right

#### WATER-MOON KUAN-YIN

Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)

16th-17th century

*Chien* ware. 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high. 33-588

The fine white porcelain with glazes ranging from cream white to bluish white, known in Europe as *blanc de chine*, was made at the Te-hua kilns in Fukien Province. An impressed seal on the back of this figure states that it was made by the well-known potter, Ho Ch'ao-tsung.



#### FISH BOWL

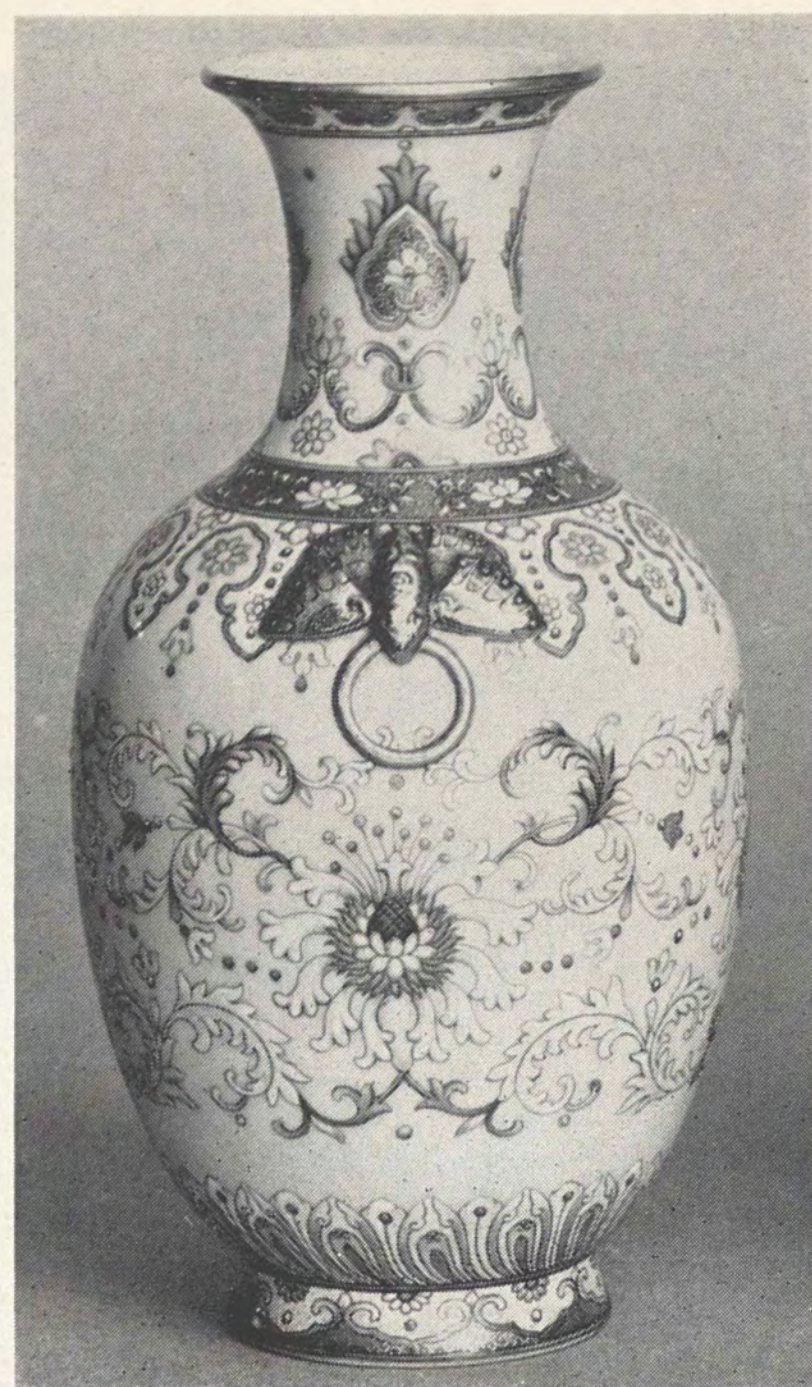
Ch'ing Dynasty (1644-1911), reign of K'ang-hsi (1662-1722)

Porcelain with five-color enamel decoration

11 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high, 21 $\frac{5}{8}$ " diameter. 55-106

Here, the decoration, of the *famille verte* palette, is especially rich, the lotus pond being rendered in red, blue, yellow, purple, several shades of green and gold.





Above—left

#### BOWL

Ch'ing Dynasty (1644-1911), reign of Yung-cheng (1723-1735)

Porcelain with over-glaze enamel decoration

5 7/8" diameter. 33-11/14

Extremely thin porcelains of this kind with exquisite decoration of the *famille rose* type were made exclusively for the imperial court. On this bowl the four-character reign mark on the foot is in pale blue over-glaze enamel.

Above—right

#### VASE (one of a pair)

Ch'ing Dynasty (1644-1911), reign of Ch'ien-lung (1736-1795)

Porcelain, pale celadon with over-glaze enamel decoration

7 3/4" high. 45-21/1,2

The elaborate decoration in the *famille rose* palette and gold is characteristic of the final phase of technically perfect and ornate porcelains produced for the palace during the long reign of the Ch'ien-lung Emperor. The six-character reign mark on the foot is in under-glaze blue.

Below—left

#### BALUSTER VASE

Ch'ing Dynasty (1644-1911), reign of K'ang-hsi (1662-1722)

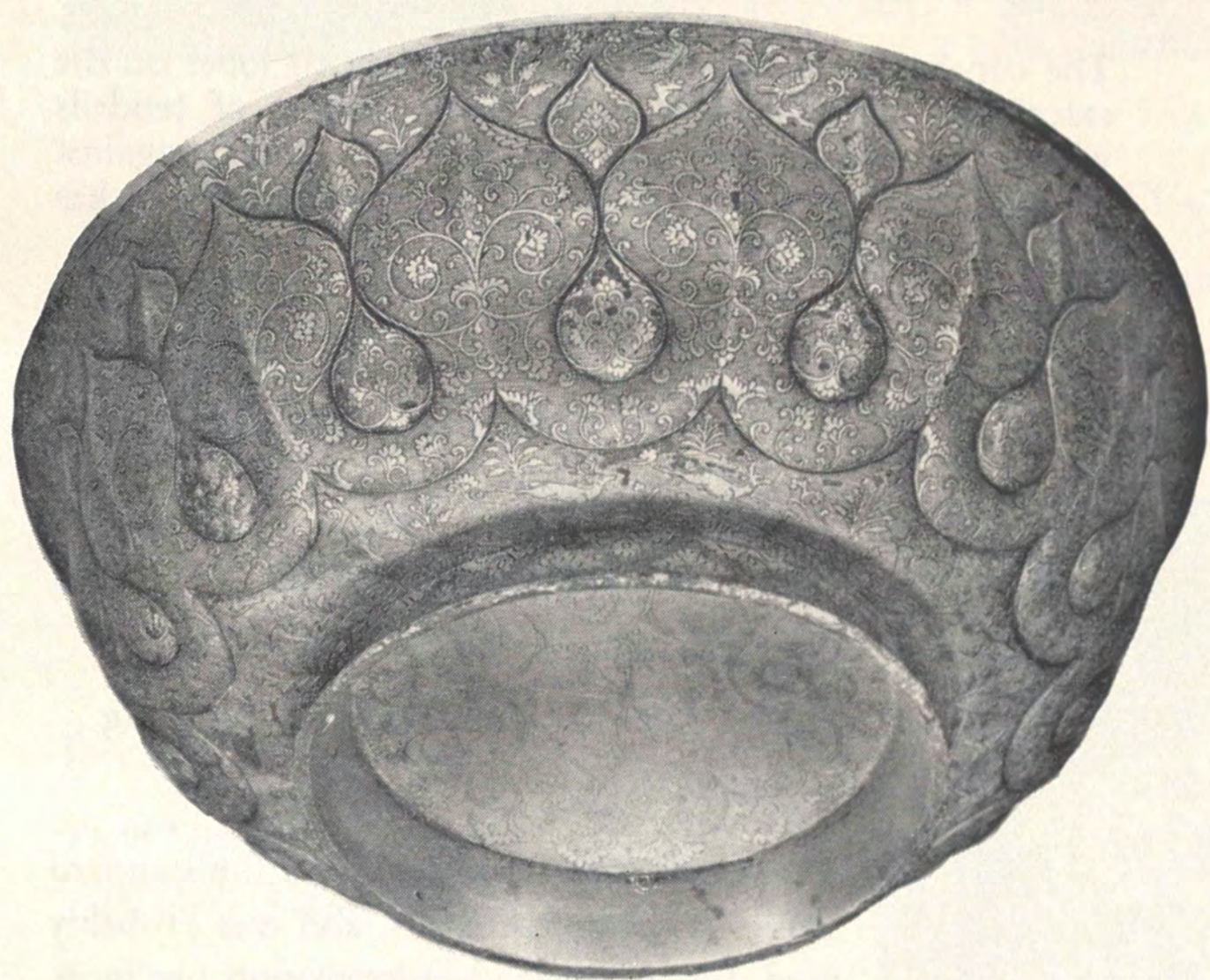
Porcelain with over-glaze enamel decoration

27 3/4" high. 47-21

Large vases of this kind, entirely decorated, often with a motif of prunus flowers, in over-glaze enamels on a green or a yellow ground were, it would appear, intended primarily for export to Europe where they blended with rococo decoration and stimulated the interest in things Chinese.







Above

### BOX IN FORM OF A RAM

T'ang Dynasty (618-906)

8th century

Silver with parcel-gilt. 31/8" long. 50-10

Left

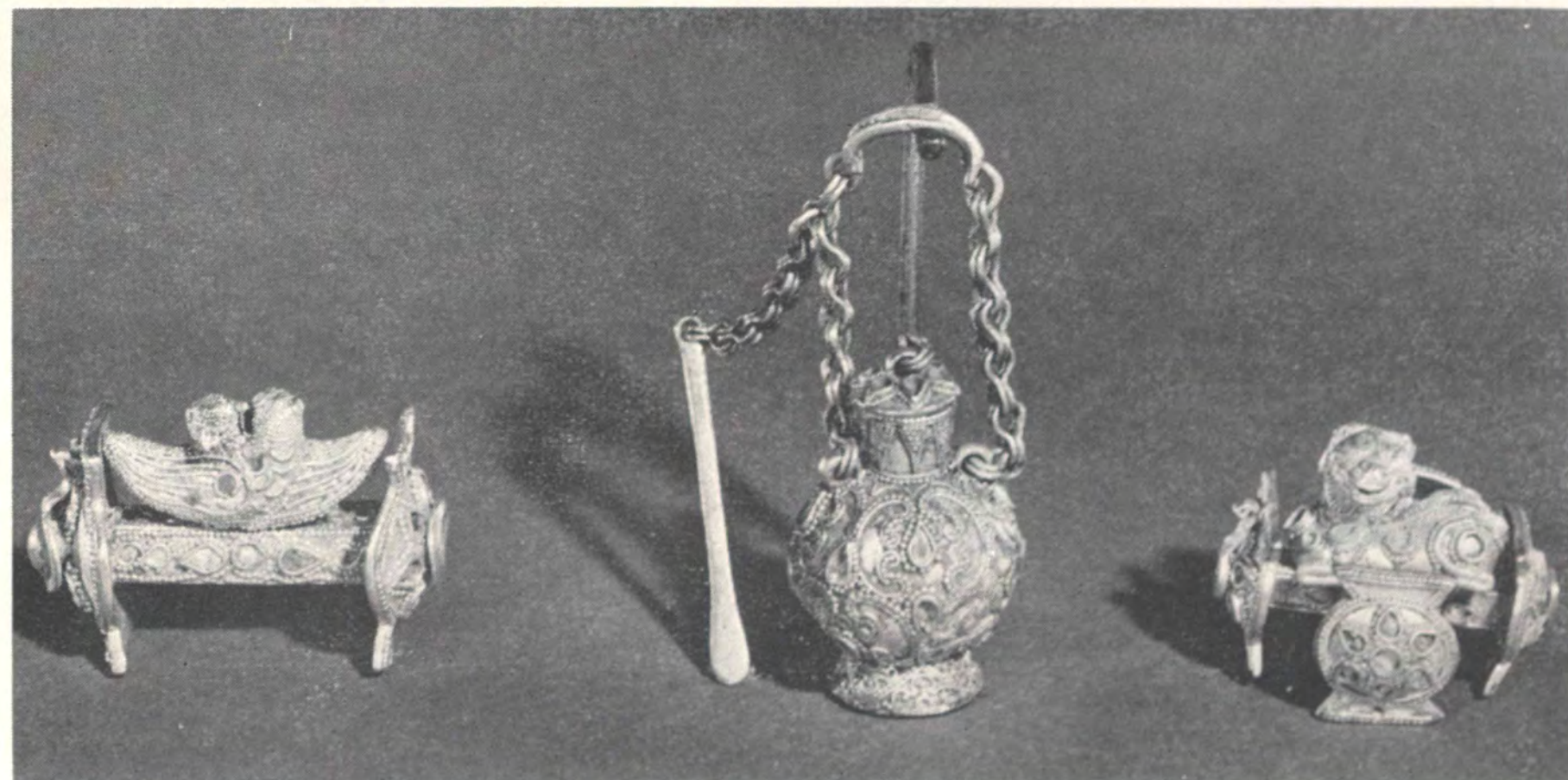
### BOWL (interior and exterior)

T'ang Dynasty (618-906)

8th century

Silver with parcel-gilt. 63/8" diameter at lip. 56-72

The floral arabesques and the animals and plants engraved on the exterior are picked out with gilding. The interior, which carries a repoussé roundel with fish, birds, and water-monsters emerging from waves, is entirely gilded.



Left

### TWO HAIRPIN ENDS (?) AND MINIATURE SCENT FLASK

Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220)

Gold with granular work. Left to Right: 5/8" h., 11/2" h., 3/4" h.  
34-33, 40-50, 34-32

The art of gold granulation was introduced into China from the West during the Eastern Han Dynasty and was practiced with notable skill.





### CUP WITH RING HANDLE

T'ang Dynasty (618-906)

Late 7th-8th century

Silver. 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ " high. 50-15

The exterior is ornamented with extremely fine and intricate engraving of tendrils with palmettes against a ground evenly textured with unusually small punch marks.



### STEM-CUP

T'ang Dynasty (618-906)

Late 7th-8th century

Silver. 2" high. 52-20

The cup has been cast; the eight petal-shaped lobes on the exterior are decorated with alternate patterns of tendrils with arabesques and birds and animals in landscape against a punch-mark textured ground. The shape of the cup has been borrowed from Sasanian Persia.



### MINIATURE SARCOPHAGUS

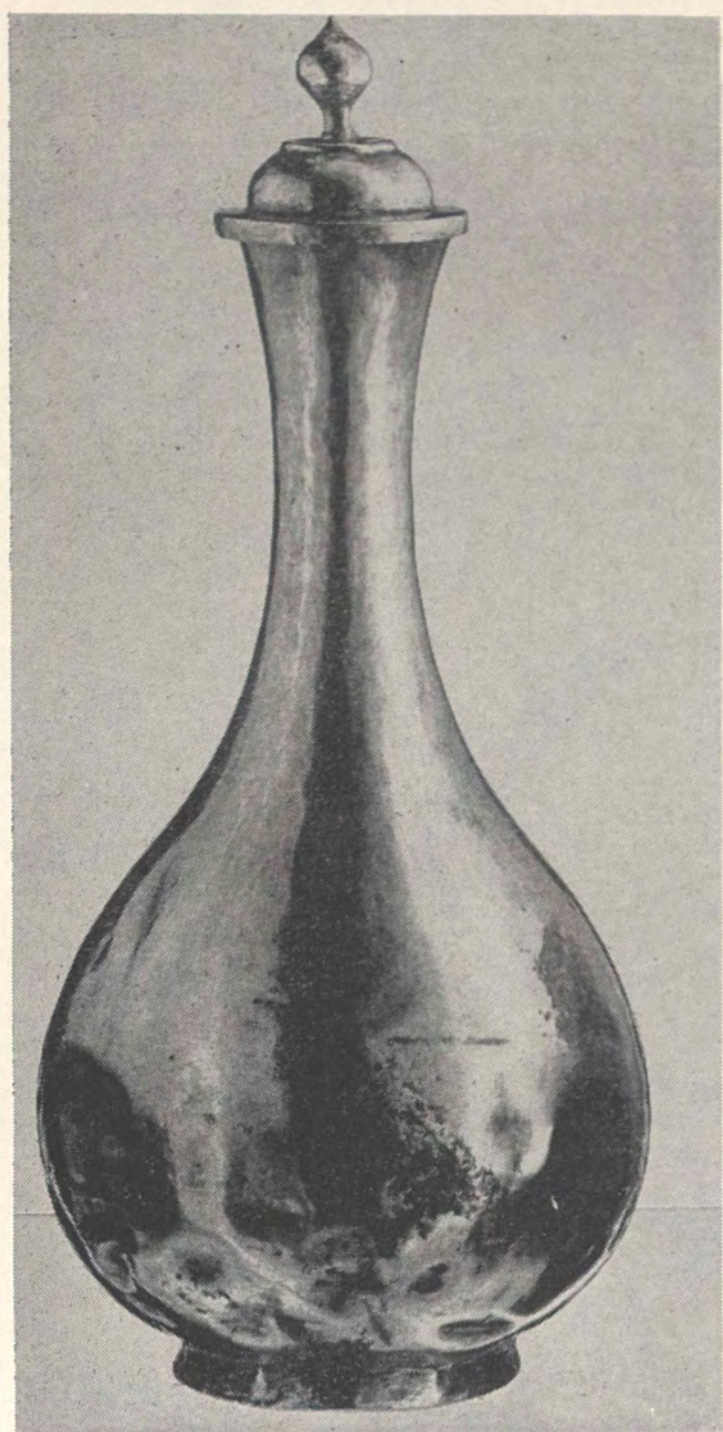
Northern Sung Dynasty (960-1127)

Silver. 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ " maximum height, 6 $\frac{3}{8}$ " long

69-10

This small sarcophagus follows the standard shape of a Chinese coffin and was probably used for ashes from a cremation, as practiced by the Buddhists. It is of hammered silver with the ring-bearing animal masks cast and soldered on. The engraved palmette design is strikingly similar to the decoration on certain ceramic pieces of the *tz'u-chou* type.



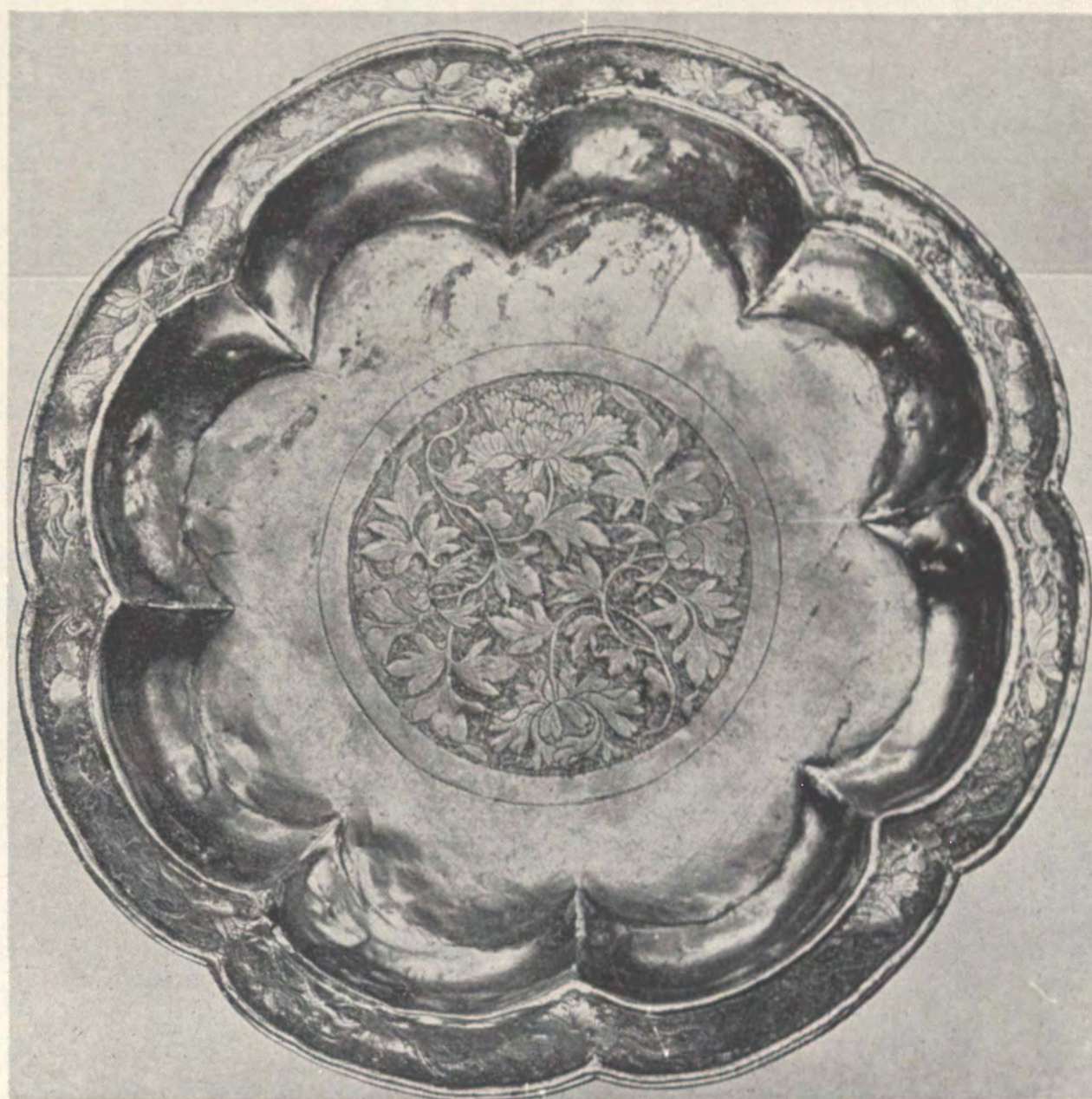


#### FLASK WITH LID

Yüan Dynasty (1279-1368)

14th century

Hammered silver. 13¾" high. 35-124/1



#### PLATE

Yüan Dynasty (1279-1368) or earlier

13th-14th century

Hammered silver with engraved designs

8⅞" diameter. 35-124/4

#### INCENSE BURNER

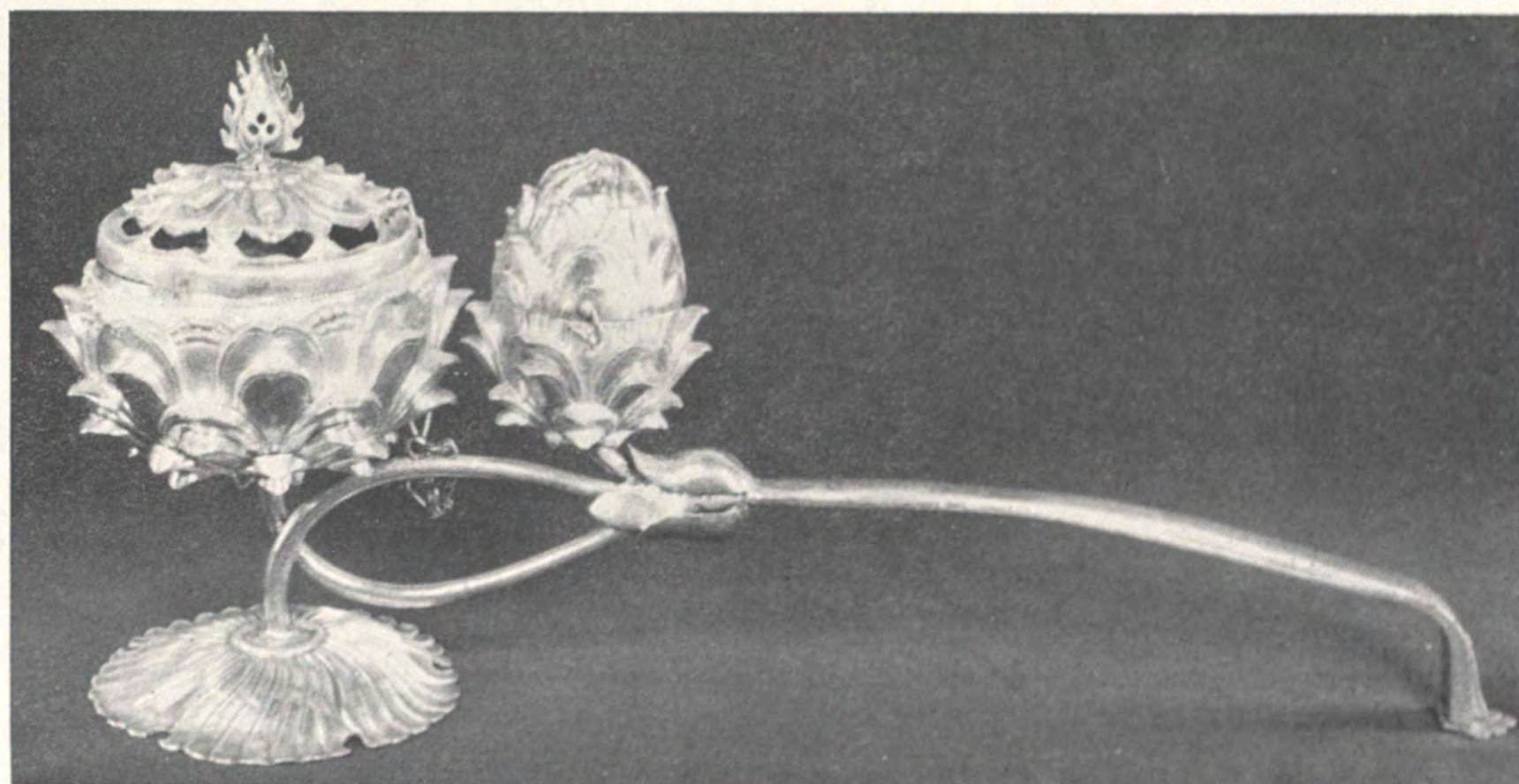
Yüan Dynasty (1279-1368) or earlier

13th-14th century

Cast and hammered silver

6" high, 12¾" long. 35-124/9

These three pieces of silver are from a hoard of eleven examples in the Gallery which were found together. Some, the covered flask among them, can be safely assigned to about 1333 through comparison with similar dated examples. All of the hoard are, however, not necessarily of the same date and some may be earlier, for example, the incense burner, which reflects Sung Dynasty style.







### TESTERED BED WITH ALCOVE

Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)

15th-16th century

*Huang-hua-li* wood. 7' 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ " high. 64-4/4

Although beds with alcoves are frequently shown in Chinese pictures, extant examples are remarkably rare. When in use the inner bed is hung with silk gauze curtains.

Below

### PAIR OF CHAIRS (from a set of four)

Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)

16th-17th century

*Huang-hua-li* wood

38 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high. 46-78/1-4

### TABLE

14th-early 15th century

*Huang-hua-li* wood. 31 $\frac{7}{8}$ " high, 74 $\frac{1}{8}$ " long. F72-55

Gift of Mrs. Kenneth A. Spencer

This is the earliest piece of *huang-hua-li* furniture in the collection.

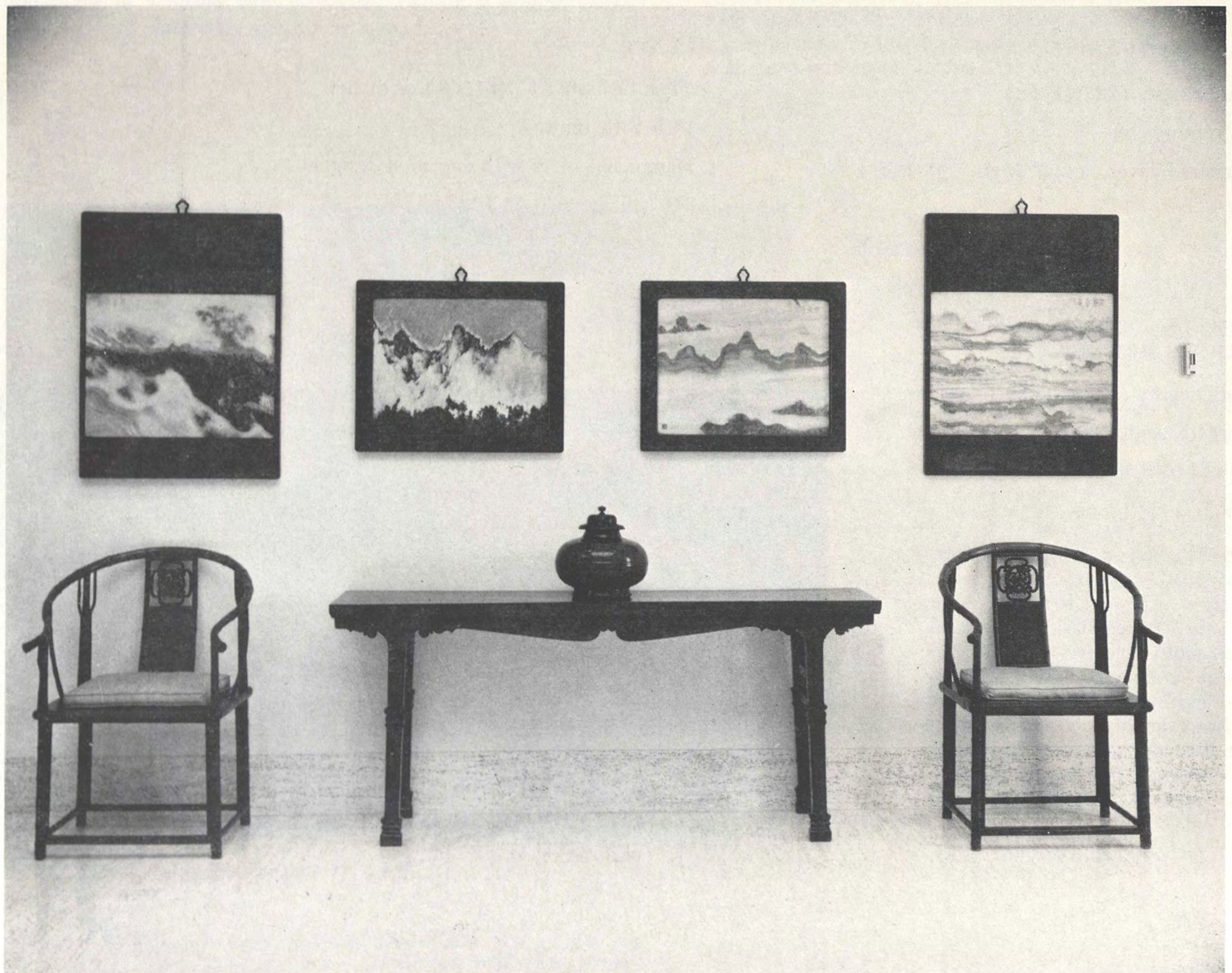
### THE FOUR SEASONS

Ch'ing Dynasty (1644-1912)

18th century

Marble. 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 27" each. 59-76/1-4

Figured marble of this kind, suggestive of pictures, comes from a Ta-li in Yünnan Province.







### FOLDING CHAIR

Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)

About 1600

*Huang-hua-li* wood. 40" high. 68-1

Probably used by a traveling official, the chair is reinforced with iron carrying silver scroll decoration.



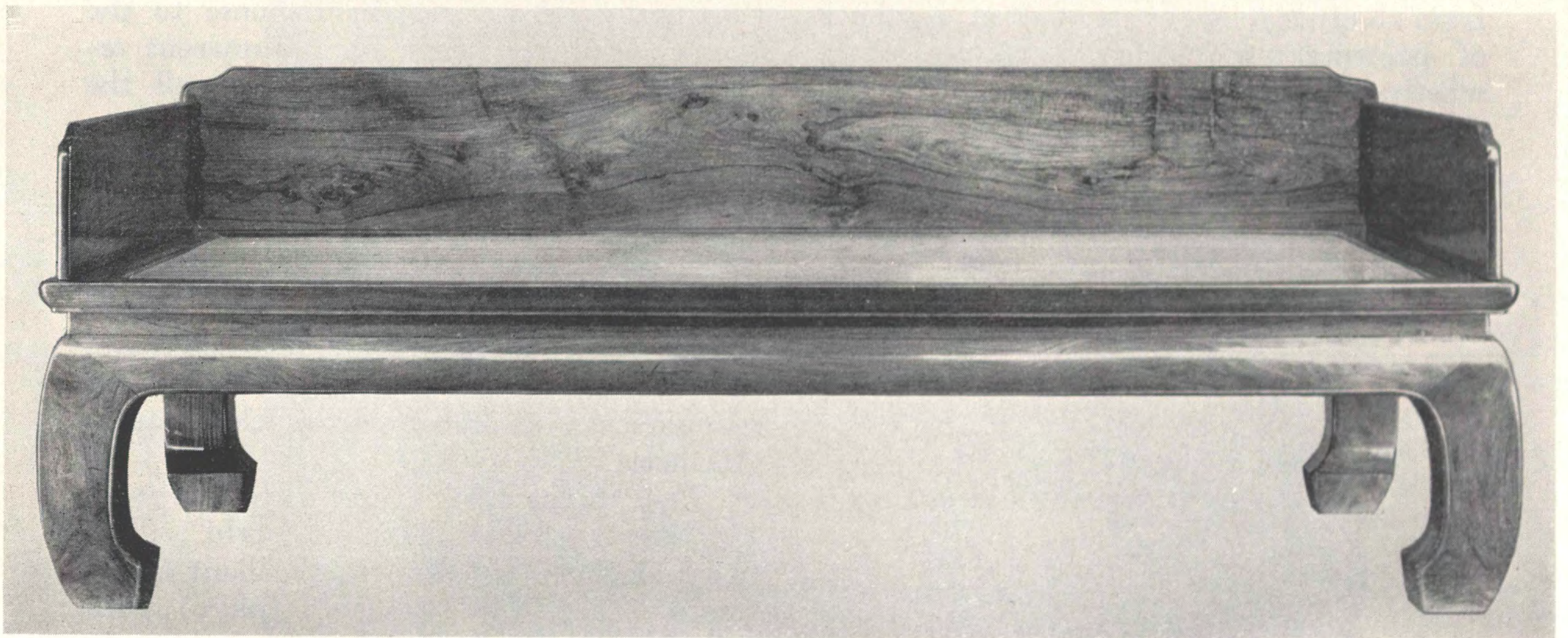
### CHAIR (one of a pair)

Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)

17th century (?)

*Huang-hua-li* wood. 47½" high

64-4/13



### COUCH

Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)

16th-17th century

*Huang-hua-li* wood

29¾" high, 44⅛" wide. F72-51

Gift of Mrs. Kenneth A. Spencer

Such massive couches, called *ch'uang* or *k'ang*, were the central or pivotal piece of furniture in the arrangement of a room, placed, whenever possible, against a north wall and facing south. In the beauty of its wood and the power and simplicity of design, this is one of the best examples known.



# Japan

The earliest aspects of civilization in the islands of Japan are known today through rich finds of ceramics. There is evidence of a neolithic culture as early as the fifth and fourth millennium B.C. noted for elaborate pottery with relief decoration produced in the Middle Jomon period (about 3000-2000 B.C.). It was not, however, until the sixth century, and then through the medium of the Buddhist religion, that Japan came in close contact with and began to assimilate the rich and complex civilization of China on the mainland of Asia.

Buddhism was first introduced into Japan from Korea in 522, and as it propagated and grew in strength there was the concomitant demand for temples, paintings, images, and all the paraphernalia of an established church. By the seventh and eighth centuries, Japanese artists and craftsmen were matching their Korean and Chinese teachers in temple building and the production of painted and sculptured Buddhist icons. During the Nara period (710-784) Buddhist art, especially sculpture in wood, began to take on pronounced Japanese character.

It is in the arts of the Heian Period (794-1185) that the Japanese spirit comes fully into its own. In Buddhist sculpture and painting the gods possess an elegance and an aura of gentleness that set them apart from all other religious art of Asia. A school of painting arose called *Yamato-e*, that, whether in the horizontal scrolls illustrating the "Tale of Genji", or the illuminations of a Buddhist sutra, was purely Japanese in its color, patterned compositions and, above all, in the degree of elegance and refinement displayed.

In the succeeding Kamakura period (1185-1392) a martial spirit dominated the arts as it did politics; vigor replaced elegance and forthrightness replaced restraint. The wood sculpture is powerful and exuberant, the Buddhist painting positive and emotionally expressive. A love of action and adventure brought about phenomenal developments in the horizontal scroll (*emakimono*) paintings, on which were depicted such subjects as great battles and events of the feudal era, the histories of temples or the lives of celebrated priests—all displaying an animated narrative style, often full of action, of a kind that has no Chinese prototype.

A powerful factor effecting the arts during the Muromachi period (1392-1568) was the popularity of the contemplative sect of Buddhism called Zen. Zen emphasis on what was natural, on simplicity and the unadorned, profoundly influenced the design of gardens, the austere pottery implements of the tea ceremony, and in painting, favored the subjective and abbreviated style in ink alone that had been evolved in China during the Southern Sung Dynasty.

The brief Momoyama Period (1568-1614) when Japan was ruled by war-lords, and the following Edo Period (1615-1867) of national stability under the Tokugawa Shoguns, ushered in new styles that were essentially decorative. In response to the demands of war-lords, their numerous retainers and a rising middle class, all the crafts flourished, so that lacquer ware, ceramics, and textiles made in these centuries are famous for the brilliance of design and perfection of techniques. Momoyama and early Edo were also the great age of screen painting, and the large paired six-fold screens, often with a luminous background of gold or silver leaf for the brilliant colors, supplied decoration of unparalleled magnificence.

The popular art known as *Ukiyo-e*, "paintings of the Floating World", drew its subject matter from the brilliant entertainment life of Edo (modern Tokyo), with pictures of courtesans and actors as the main theme. Being an art for the people, *Ukiyo-e* found its most satisfactory expression in the mass-produced polychrome wood-block prints, and print-making flourished throughout the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries.

LS



HEAD OF A GUARDIAN KING (?)  
Kamakura Period (1185-1392)  
Wood. 4' 1" high. 33-1682







## BENZAI-TEN

Late Heian-Early Kamakura period, late 12th century

Color on silk. 3' 11½" high, 2' 3" wide. 33-8/15

The lineage of Benzai-ten leads back to an ancient Indian river goddess who, according to later legends, became the wife of Brahma and the goddess of speech and learning. When she entered Japan, along with popular Buddhism, she became the goddess of language, music, and eloquence. As the deity of cultural amenities, her representation escapes the more rigid and formal iconography of the high gods, and she may be shown, as here, in the guise of an elegant court beauty. Gowned in opulent court dress with ruffles at the elbows and edging the skirt, a deeply scalloped 'cloud collar' and ornamental coiffure, she is seated on the bank of a stream, languidly strumming

a *biwa*, her court shoes resting on a rock in the foreground.

The tall trees aglow with large blossoms in the background and the landscape, done in broad washes, are in the manner of T'ang dynasty China in the eighth century, as are the details of the goddess's costume. Although in all aspects the painting is in keeping with an early style, certain similarities, however, between this painting and those on the doors of the Kichijo-ten shrine at Jorijuji, Nara, believed to have been done before 1212, suggest that the Gallery picture is a transitional work between the late Heian and the opening years of the Kamakura period.





Above

# KANNON BOSATSU

Early Heian Period (784-897)

Wood. 5' 6" high. 31-129

Below

# JIZO BOSATSU

Early to Middle Heian Period

9th-10th century

Wood. 3' 3" high. 31-141/2

The deep-cut parallel folds, smooth area of the thighs, and rather somber aspect suggest an early date.

Buddhist images of this period tended toward a certain heaviness and solidity, conveying a quality of inner power and solemn calm. Both hands on this image of Jizo are later restorations.





## AMIDA BUDDHA

Late Heian to Kamakura Period

12th-13th century

Gilded wood. 9' 2" high. 31-141/1

Amida, the Buddha presiding over the Western Paradise, is represented in this large image as seated with hands in the *samadhi-mudra*, a position signifying profound meditation. Amida is the central deity of the Jōdō sect, which grew rapidly from the tenth century on by reason of its doctrine of a relatively easy road to salvation for all. The image was made by a technique called *yosegi*, having been sculptured from a number of wood blocks assembled around a hollow interior, a manner of construction perfected in the latter half of the eleventh century. This image is reported to have come from a temple in the neighborhood of Lake Biwa.







Left

# KUJAKU-MYŌŌ

Artist unknown

Kamakura Period (1185 to 1392)

Color and gold on silk

6' 11" x 3'. 31-100/17

Although the Myōō of the Shingon sect are generally ferocious in aspect, Kujaku-Myōō is shown with benign features. The painting with its rich color and fine drawing is characteristic of the high level in Buddhist painting maintained through the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The delicate patterns in gold on the garments and lotus throne are not done with gold paint but are extremely thin strips cut from gold leaf and pasted on the silk, a meticulous technique called *kirikane*.



Right

# BONTEN

Artist unknown

Late Kamakura Period (1185-1392)

14th century

Color and gold on silk. 4' x 15¾". 62-18

Bonten is the Japanese form of the Hindu god Brahma, the Lord of the Heavens. The deity is represented with four heads and four arms, holding a trident, a flask, and a lotus, with one hand in the gesture of wish-bestowing. The trailing scarfs and garments are agitated and drawn with firm, rather broad lines, some with hook-backs characteristic of Kamakura brush-work.



## TEMPLE ON A HILLSIDE

Artist unknown

Kamakura Period (1185-1392)

Early 14th century

Ink and color on paper

14" x 19 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". 62-3

In a temple supported by a high scaffolding against a hillside, an old priest is talking with a young lady. The painting is only a section taken from a long scroll, the *Yuzu-nenbutsu Engi*, illustrating the life of a famous priest, Ryonin. It is painted in the loose, free, and vivid manner that is purely Japanese, a style that enjoyed its richest development during the Kamakura Period.



## A DEITY BESIDE A RUINED TEMPLE

Artist unknown

Kamakura Period (1185-1392)

Mid-14th century

Ink and color on paper

13 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 22". 60-14

## PROCESSION OF PRIESTS WITH OFFERINGS

Artist unknown

Kamakura Period (1185-1392)

Mid-14th century

12 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 25 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". 60-15

Both of these paintings are sections taken from two long scrolls called *Konin Shonin Eden*, originally in a small temple, Jin-o-ji, near Osaka. The story illustrated involves a temple to a minor Korean deity, Hoshogongen, that had fallen into ruin, and its eventual rebuilding. In the upper illustration, the god dressed in full armor is viewing with deep annoyance the dilapidated condition of his temple. In the lower picture a procession of monks brings offerings. In the vivid drawing of landscape, trees, and plants, Japanese genius had evolved a perfect style for visual story-telling. The vibrant colors — malachite green, ochre, vermillion-orange and lapis-lazuli—contribute their own animation to the narrative character.







# LANDSCAPE

Attributed to Kano Motonobu  
(1476-1559)

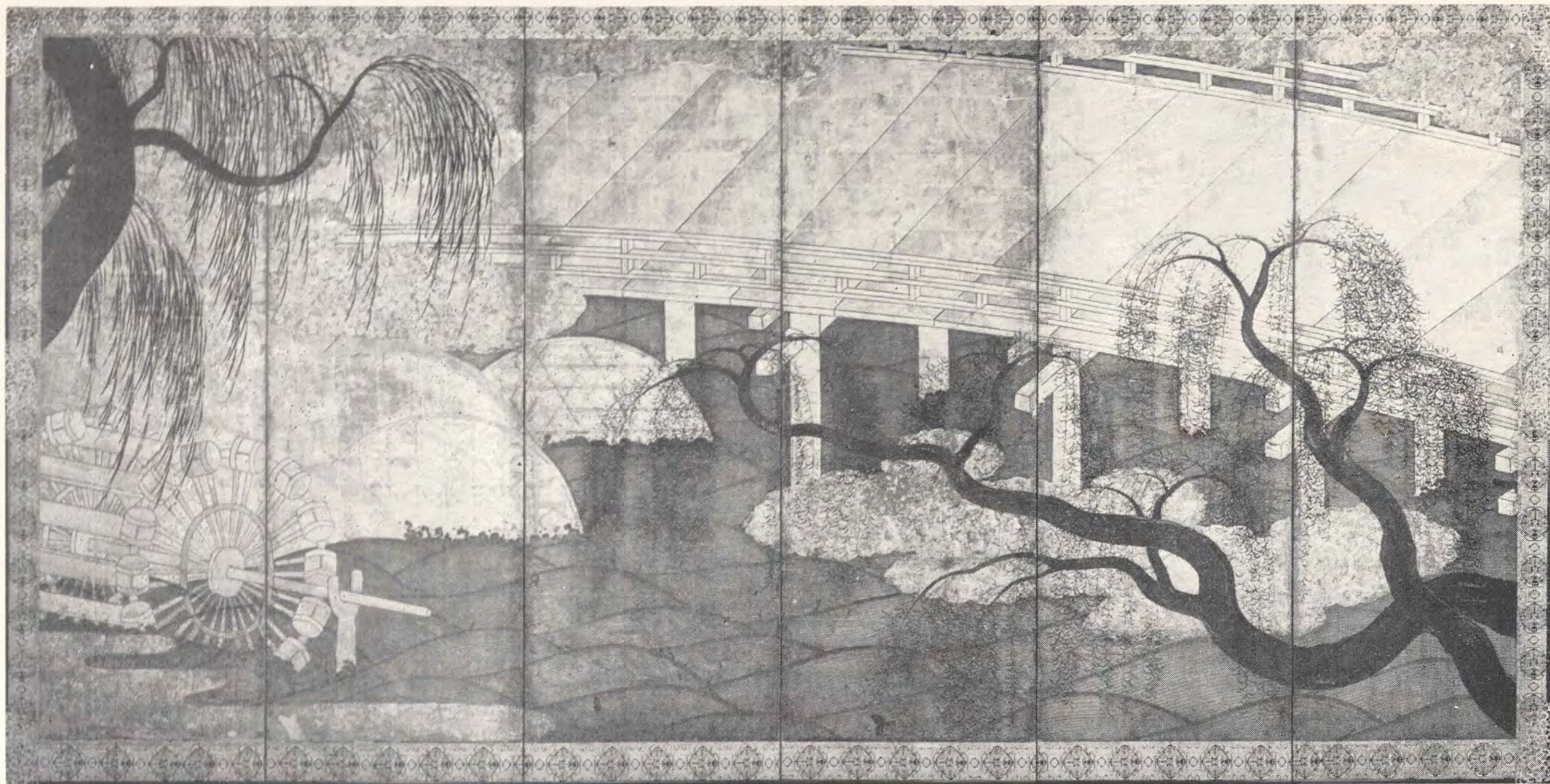
Muromachi Period (1392-1568)

Ink and light color on paper  
20" x 13½". 70-42

Gift of Mrs. George H. Bunting, Jr.

The second great artist of the Kano School, founded by Kano Masanobu, was his son Motonobu. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries there was a revival in Japan of interest in Chinese cultural ideals. A style of landscape painting evolved that was based ultimately on certain aspects of Chinese paintings of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. But in their simple range of tones, assertive brush-strokes, and the strongly defined outlines of forms, the landscapes of Motonobu are thoroughly nationalized and Japanese in character.





Above and opposite page

# THE RIVER BRIDGE AT UJI

Artist unknown

Momoyama Period (1568-1614)

Ink, color, and gold on paper. Pair of six-fold screens, each 5' 7½" x 11' 1¼". 58-53/1, 2

Below and opposite page

# WATERS IN FLOOD

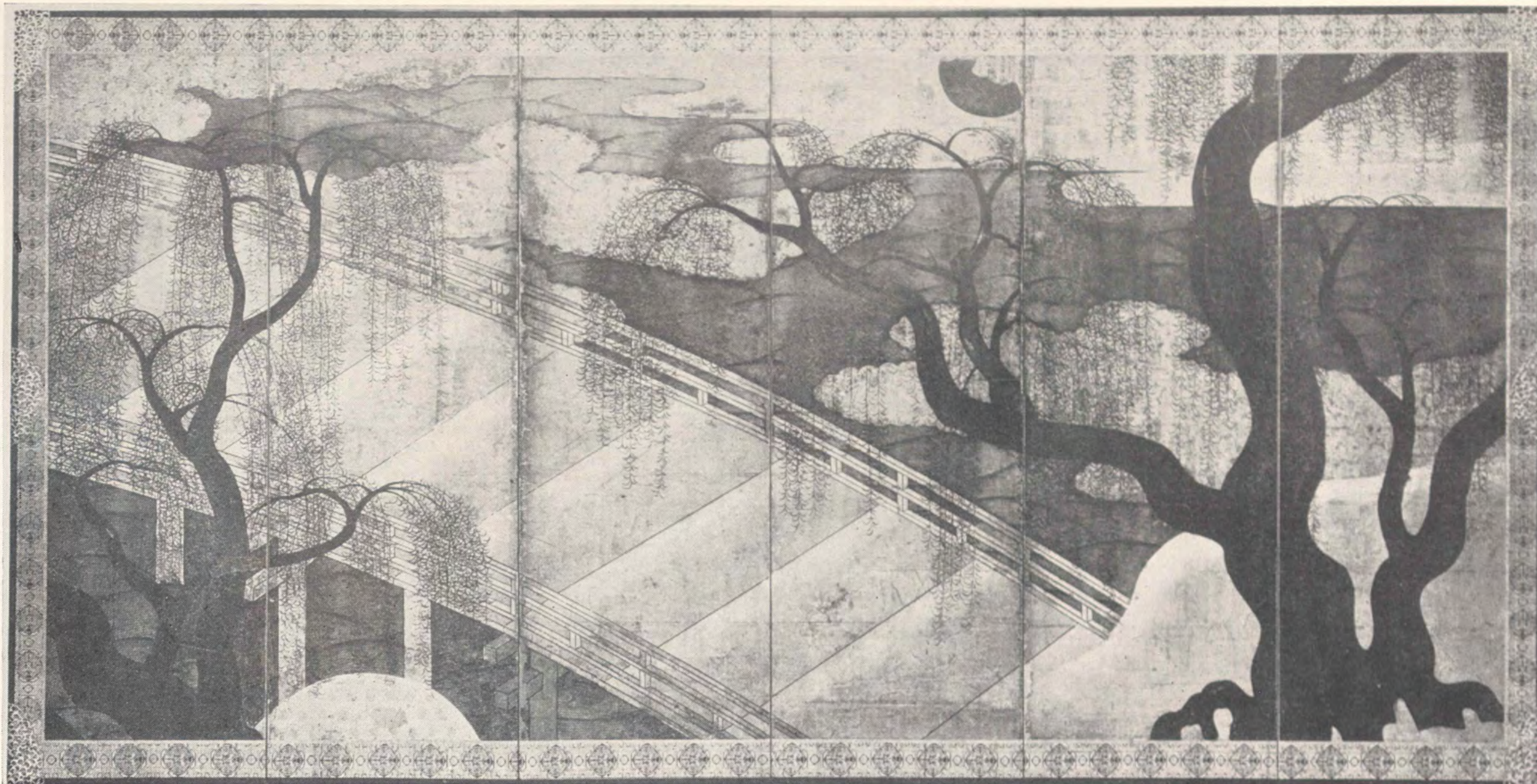
Artist unknown

Momoyama Period (1568-1614)

Ink, color, and gold on paper. Pair of six-fold screens, each 5' 7" x 12' 6". 69-20, 70-8



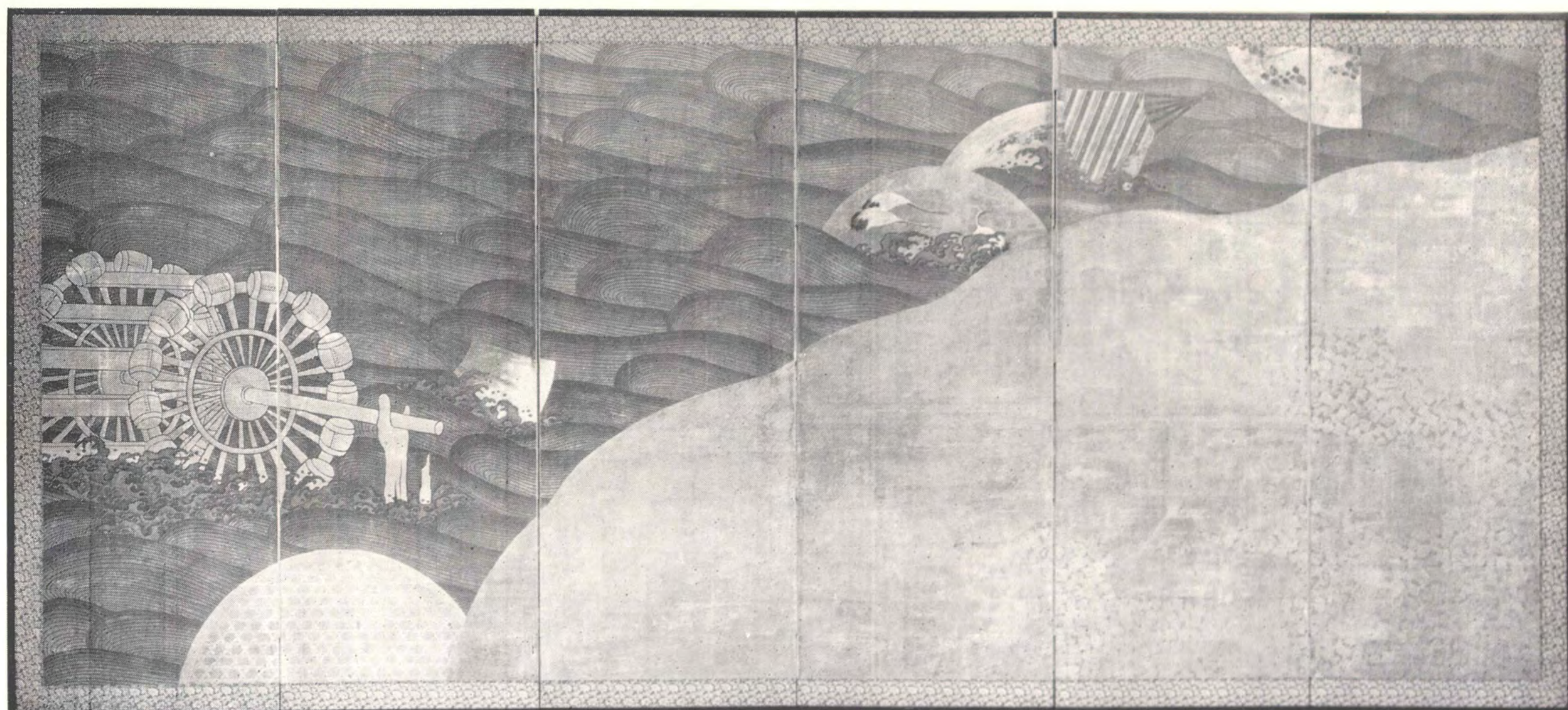




Although the earlier years of the Momoyama period were times of civil wars between contending feudal barons, consolidation came under such great military leaders as Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu, founder of the Tokugawa Shogunate. The period was one of opulence and magnificence in all the arts, serving the display of status and power — architecture, textiles, lacquer ware, and above all, screens on which the artists of the Kano school painted bold and sweeping designs against gleaming gold grounds. The de-

sign of the Uji River bridge and willows must have been especially popular, since a number of pairs are known and the composition was retained into the Tokugawa period.

The screens of *WATERS IN FLOOD* make use of the water-wheel and round fish traps that appear in the Uji Bridge screens and add the scattered fans swept away by the churning waves, perhaps a melancholy symbol of those drowned in the torrent.







Below and opposite page

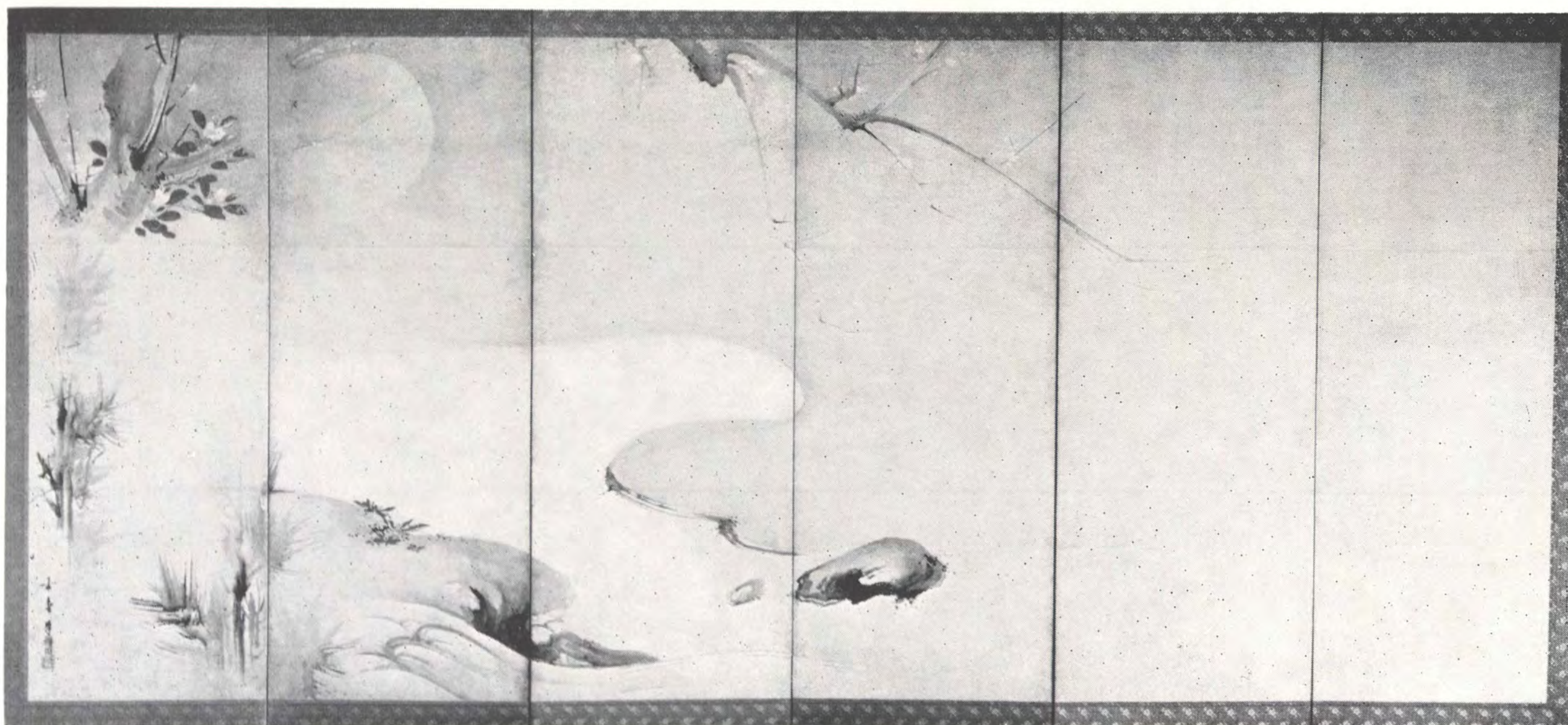
# PINE AND PLUM BY MOONLIGHT

Kaiho Yusho (1533-1615)

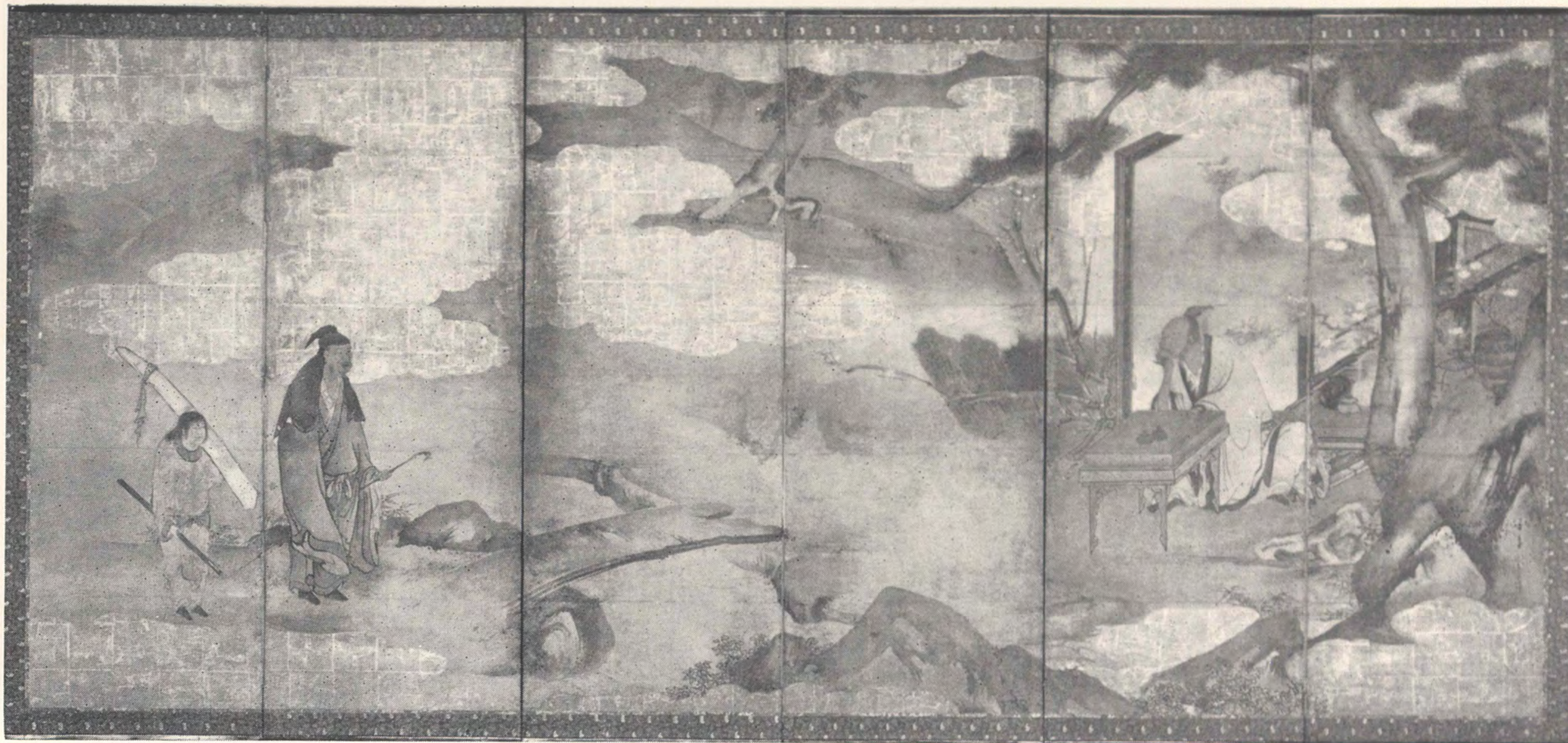
Momoyama Period (1568-1614)

Ink and some color on paper. Pair of six-panel screens  
5' 6½" x 11' 7" each. 58-25/1, 2

Kaiho Yusho, one of the leading artists of the Momoyama Period, enjoyed a high reputation during his lifetime, executing works for such patrons as the warrior chieftain, Hideyoshi, and the Emperor Goyozei. Few artists could equal his mastery of ink washes and subtle tonal relations. With complete mastery the artist defines forms emerging out of and dissolving into the moonlit silvery mist. This pair of screens is considered to be among the masterworks of Kaiho Yusho.







Above and opposite page

# THE FOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

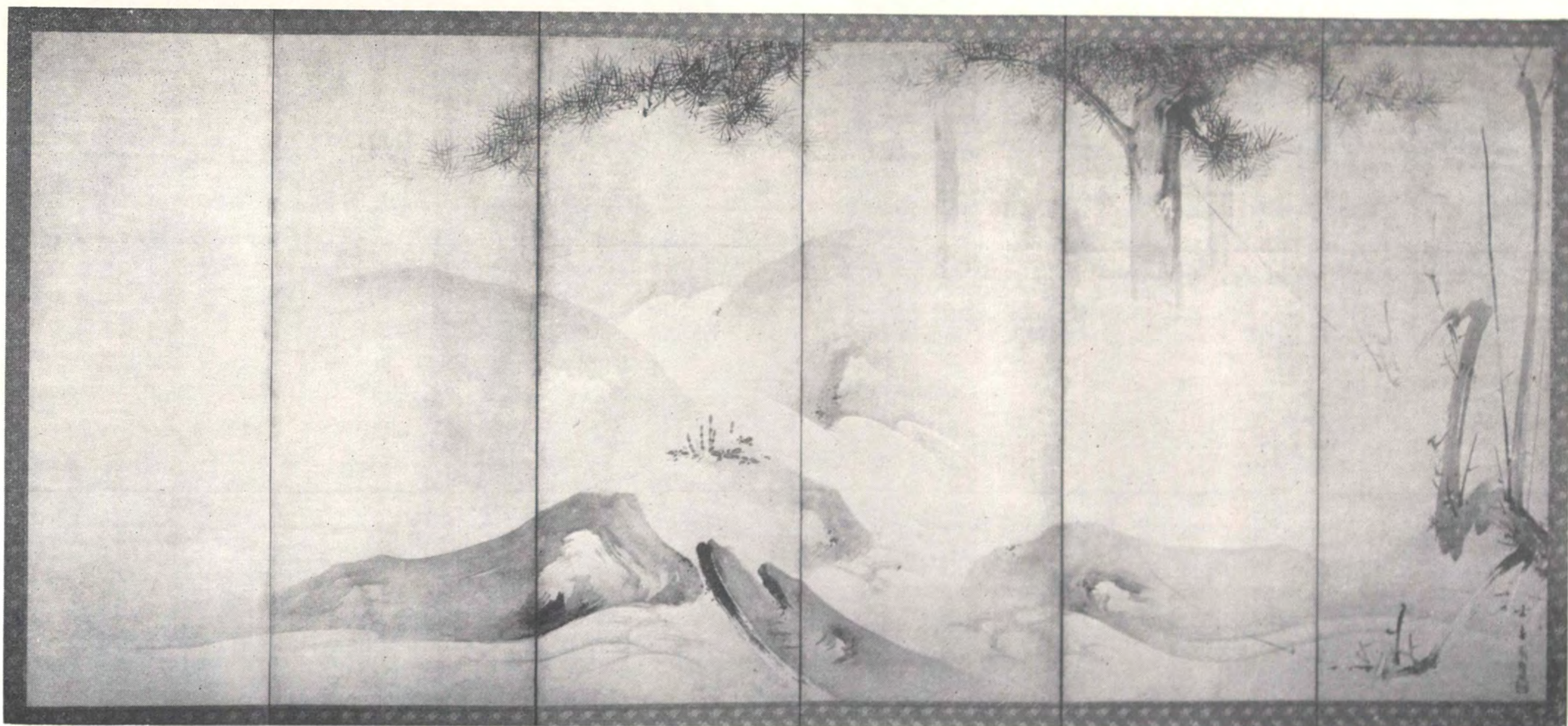
Kaiho Yusho (1533-1615)

Momoyama Period (1568-1614)

Ink, color and gold leaf. Pair of six-fold screens

5' 4" x 11' 4<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" each. 60-13/1, 2

Notably different from the screens of PINE AND PLUM BY MOONLIGHT, here the same artist, Kaiho Yusho, has followed a more recognizable Chinese design derived from the Che School of painting during the Ming Dynasty. The bold, decorative design, as well as the brush-work, is, however, purely Japanese. The Four Accomplishments are: Music, represented by the figure approaching a bridge and whose attendant carries a wrapped musical instrument, the *ch'in*; Chess, which is shown by the worthy at the extreme right, leaning on his board and waiting for a game; Writing and Painting, the twin arts, are here combined in the group on the extreme left in which a sage instructs a boy in the use of the brush.







### JITTOKU

Nonomura Sotatsu, first half of the 17th century  
Edo Period (1615-1867)

Ink on paper. 3' 11½" x 15¼". 67-45/3

Gift of Mrs. George H. Bunting, Jr.

This scroll must originally have been one of a matching pair, the companion painting depicting Kanzan, the inseparable companion of Jittoku. The two were Zen Buddhist eccentric recluses always shown with dishevelled hair and tattered clothes. Sotatsu and the artist Koetsu are regarded as the founders of the Rimpa school of Japanese decorative painters. Sotatsu was equally skilled in the full colored style, often with the addition of gold and silver, in the old tradition of *Yamato-e*, or working in ink alone, as here, a manner especially suitable for Zen subjects.



### CHRYSANTHEMUMS

Kitagawa Sosetsu, mid-17th century

Edo Period (1615-1867)

Color and gold on paper. 3' 8½" x 17½". 68-49/1

Gift of Mrs. George H. Bunting, Jr.

Although little is known about the life of Sosetsu it is clear that he followed in the tradition of the great decorative painter, Sotatsu, who may even have been a close relative. Sosetsu is primarily known as a flower painter, a subject to which he brought an un-failing sense of design and color.





Above and below

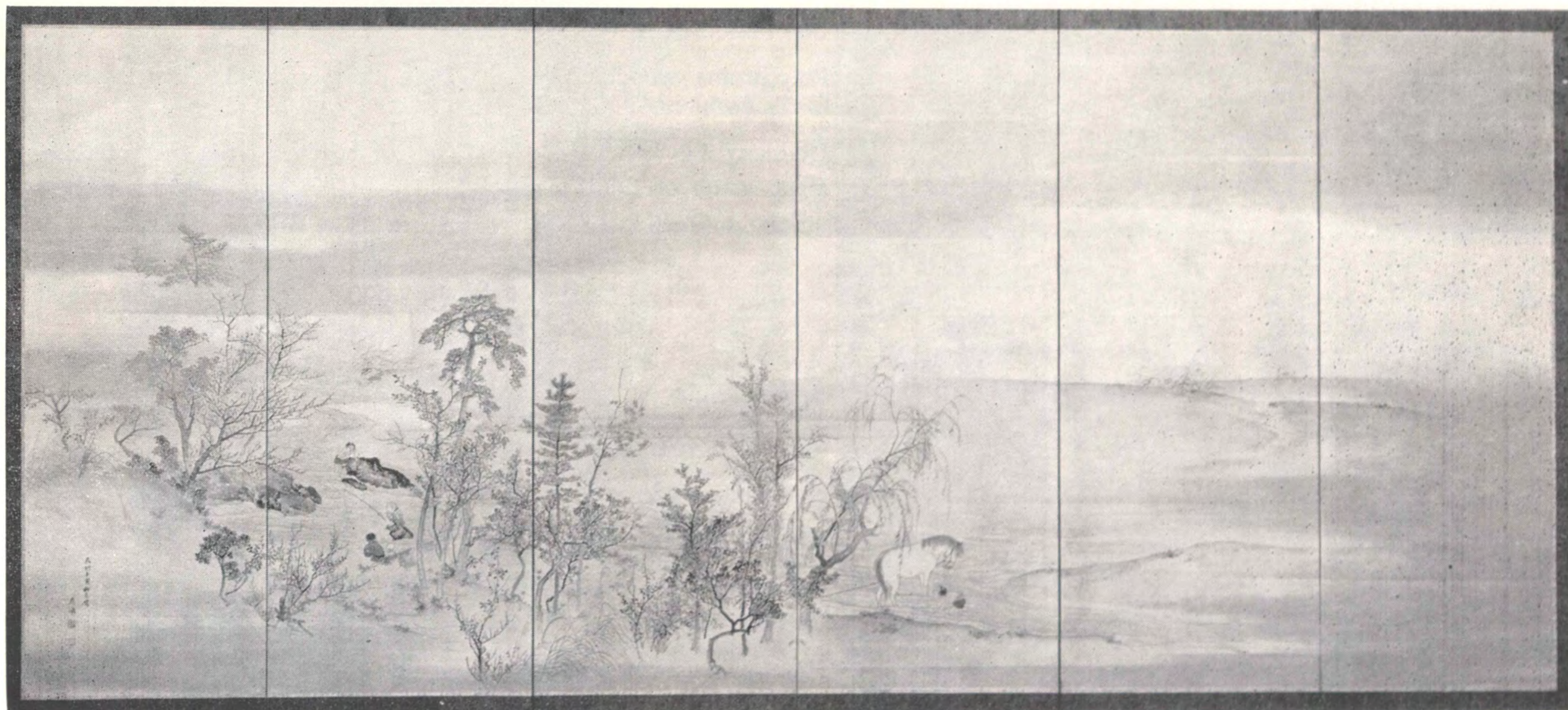
**SPRING AND AUTUMN WITH CHILDREN  
PLAYING BY THE SEA**

By Maruyama Okyo (1733-1795). Dated 1782

Edo Period (1615 to 1867)

Color and gold on paper. Pair of six-fold screens,  
each 5' 7½" x 12' 4½". 70-30/1, 2

Maruyama Okyo inaugurated a new style, introducing into the decorative tradition of the Kano School a fresh vision of the beauties of the natural world. In his paintings he employed new elements of realism derived from a study of certain early Chinese artists and of Western perspective based on Dutch prints, which had come to Japan not long before. Distant islands and cottages appear just above the horizon. The soft mist drifting across both screens, as well as the banks of clouds, is done in delicate washes of gold. The screens were painted in 1782, toward the end of the artist's career, for one of his patrons, Shobei Ban, a prominent merchant of Kyoto.







### A COURTESAN

Ando Kaigetsudo (about 1671 to after 1714)

Edo Period (1615-1867)

Ink and color on paper. 40 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". 32-83/5

Although Kaigetsudo drew his subject matter from the gay night life of Edo, he did not make woodblock prints. His bold style with heavy, sweeping outlines and brilliant textile patterns is known only from his paintings.

Opposite page

Above—left

### THE ACTORS ISHIKAWA DANJURO I AND YAMANAKA HEIKURO

Tori Kiyomasu I (1678-1716)

Edo Period (1615-1867)

Woodblock print, hand-colored. 23 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". 32-143/9

Two characters in the play *Keisei Oshokun* are fighting for an elephant to dismember it and recover a precious jewel it has swallowed.

Kiyomasu was one of the early print masters who promoted the theater in Tokyo. Printed in black and white, this sheet has been hand colored. The print is unique, so far as is known.

Below—left

### SAWAMURA SOJURO III AS OTOMO NO KURONOSHI

Toshusai Sharaku, active 1794 to 1795

Edo Period (1615-1867)

Woodblock print. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". 32-143/159

This is a very rare print by an artist generally known for his large portrait heads of actors, strongly satirical in character.

Above—right

### TWO WOMEN

By Kitagawa Utamaro (1753-1806)

Edo Period (1615-1867)

Polychrome woodblock print, from the series "Three Classes of Girl's Fashions." 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 10". 32-143/146

Utamaro was famous for his prints of beauties from the entertainment center of Edo (modern Tokyo). This print purports to be a unique impression.

Below—right

### WATERFALL OF AMIDA, KISO PROVINCE

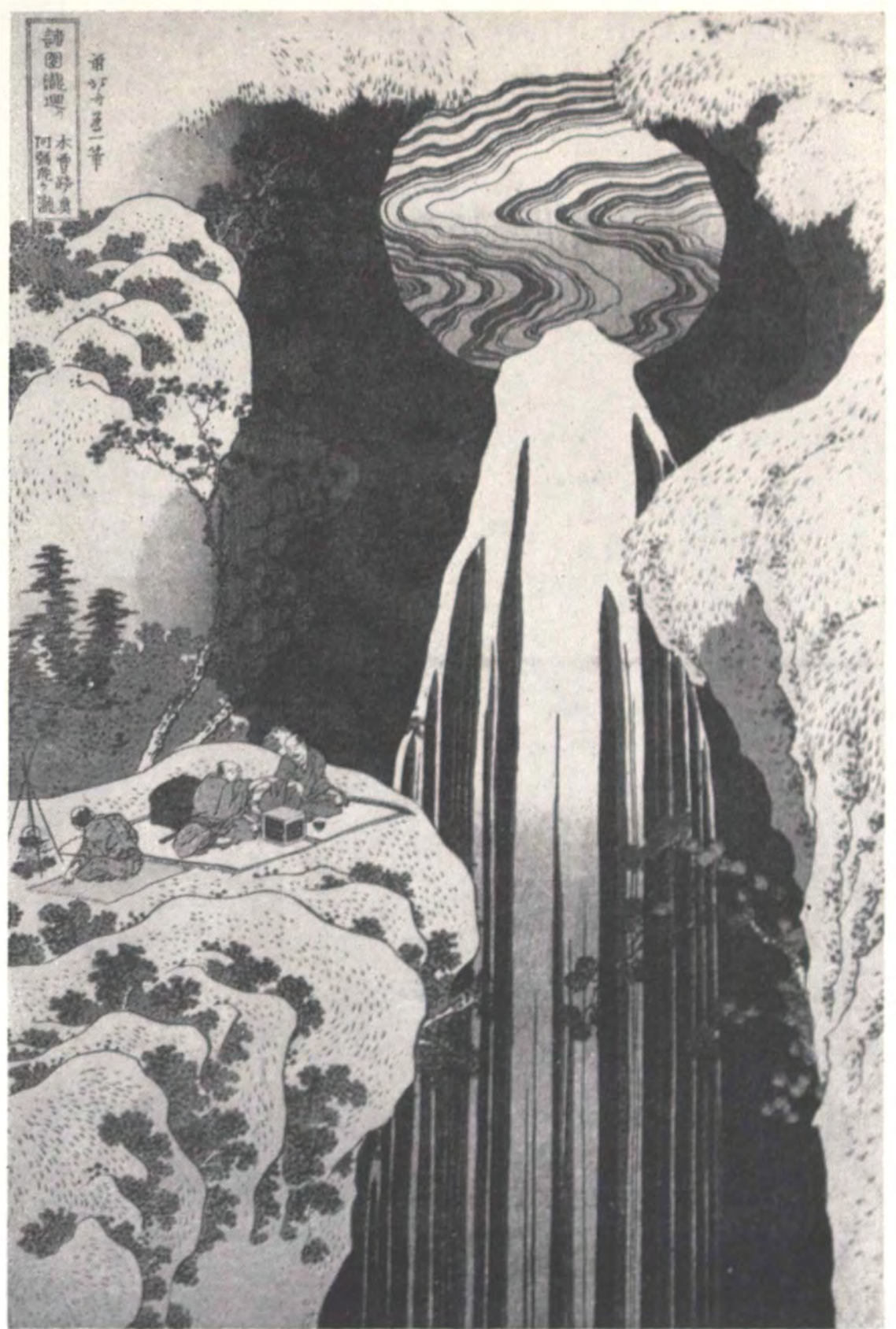
Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849)

Edo Period (1615-1867)

Polychrome woodblock print, from the series "Waterfalls of the Various Provinces". 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". 32-143/182

Hokusai shares honors with Hiroshige as one of the two great print masters who excelled in landscape.









### DISH

Momoyama Period (1568-1614)

*Shino* ware. 6½" x 6¾". 67-45/1

Gift of Mrs. George H. Bunting, Jr.



### DISH

Momoyama Period (1568-1614)

Gray *Shino* ware. 6¼" square, 2" high. 62-17

The Momoyama period was a remarkably creative period in the history of Japanese ceramics. New wares, utilizing different clays and glazes, appeared as a sign of and in answer to an exuberant new aesthetic that saw the rich and sumptuous pass with the humble and unpretentious. *Shino* ware was among the earliest of these wares, and found much favor among the Tea Masters, who had become the arbiters of taste by the end of the sixteenth century. An air of casual spontaneity softens the clear-cut decorative rhythms of the drawing on these two dishes. Glazes are thick, bubbly, and cover the body only irregularly, leaving patches of the exposed body to turn red. The potting itself seems a bit awkward, and the slightly misshapen rims give way with charming directness to the rounded bodies below. It would be a mistake to regard these pieces as being products of a genuinely rustic art. Irregularity, incompleteness, imperfection, and effects of spontaneous casualness are all pointedly contrived in a very sophisticated aesthetic matrix. They are, in a sense, "pseudo-naive".

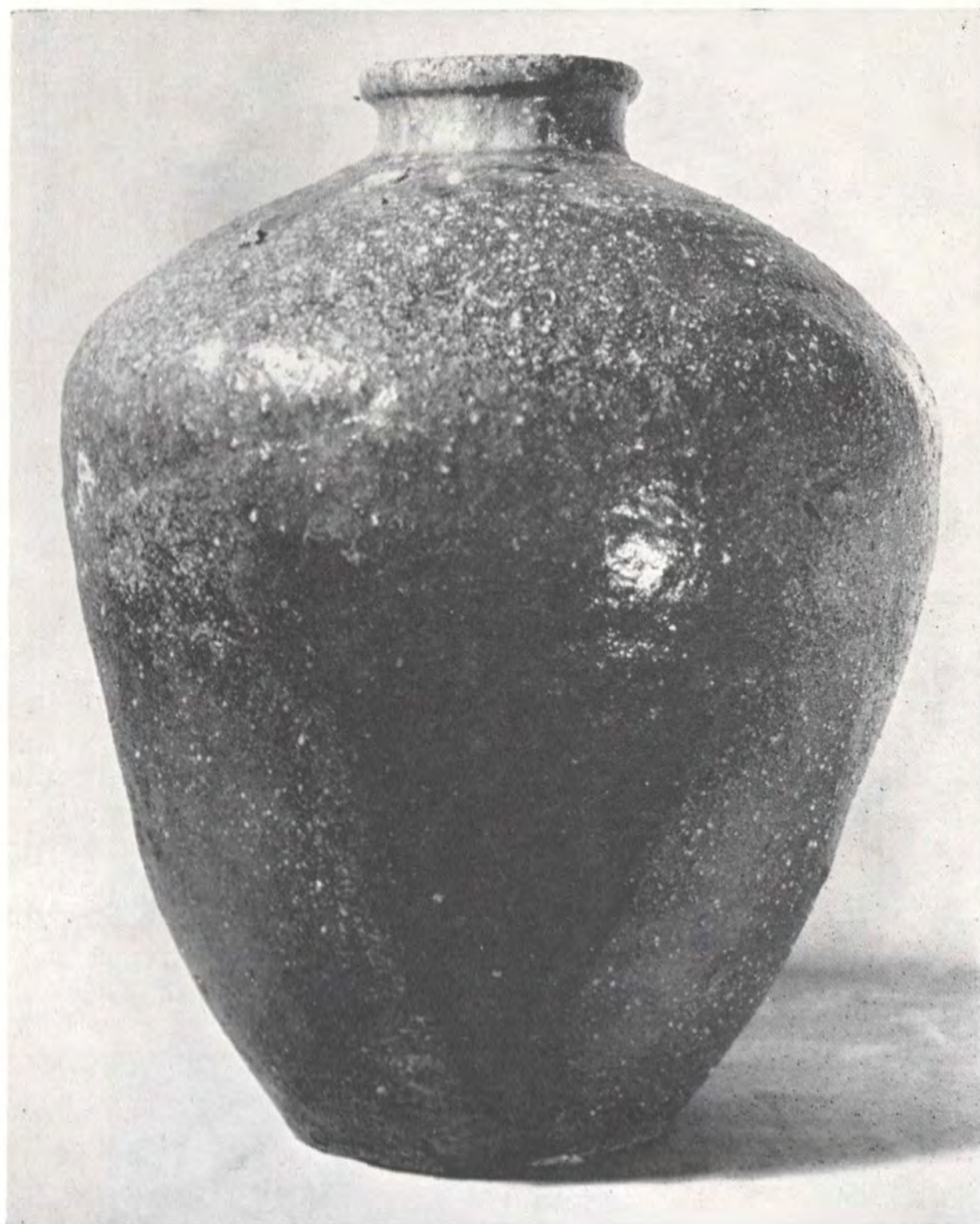
Left

### STORAGE JAR

Muromachi Period (1392-1568), 16th century

*Shigaraki* ware. 17" high. F72-43

Gift of the Japan-America Society of Kansas City



Stonewares have survived in Japan as the most enduring and characteristic of ceramic traditions. Direct and unsophisticated, these wares, which were originally made for everyday country use, paradoxically found great favor in the sophisticated tea taste of later centuries. A natural ash glaze, running freely over the shoulder, covers a coarse, sandy body burned red by the oxidizing atmosphere of the kiln.





Left

# SQUARE PLATE WITH PEONY DESIGN

Ogata Kenzan (1663-1743)

Edo Period (1615-1867)

Glazed pottery, Kyoto ware. 7 9/16" square. 67-45/2

Gift of Mrs. George H. Bunting, Jr.

It was Kenzan who raised the Japanese potter's craft to the status of a fine art, creatively on a par with painting and replete with recorded personalities, rather than anonymous craftsmen. Kenzan's ceramics, most of which were aimed at the tea ceremony, combine the boldness of Japanese textile design, the spontaneous ease of the ink-painter, the unpretentious mellowness of a *raku*-ware tea bowl, and the sophistication of Japanese aristocratic taste. The square dish (left) is a type favored by Kenzan. The lightweight earthenware body has been covered by a whitish slip, which, together with the smoothed, flat shape, provides an excellent ground for him to show off his expertise in painting and calligraphy. The designs have typically been done in iron-oxide, and the whole covered by a clear, *raku*-type lead glaze.



# SET OF FIVE COVERED BOWLS (two shown)

Ogata Kenzan (1663-1743)

Edo Period (1615-1867)

Glazed pottery, Kyoto ware

3 5/8" high. 71-33/1-5

Gift of Mrs. George H. Bunting, Jr.

Like the plate above, these bowls have been molded from lightweight clay, but in a rare coral color, and covered with a *raku*-type glaze. The decoration, characteristic of Kenzan, combines broad bands of white slip with free but effective underglaze grasses sketched in iron oxide and blue and green enamels. The set has been named "Wide Plains of Musashi".

Right

# SET OF FIVE DISHES (two shown)

Edo Period (1615-1867)

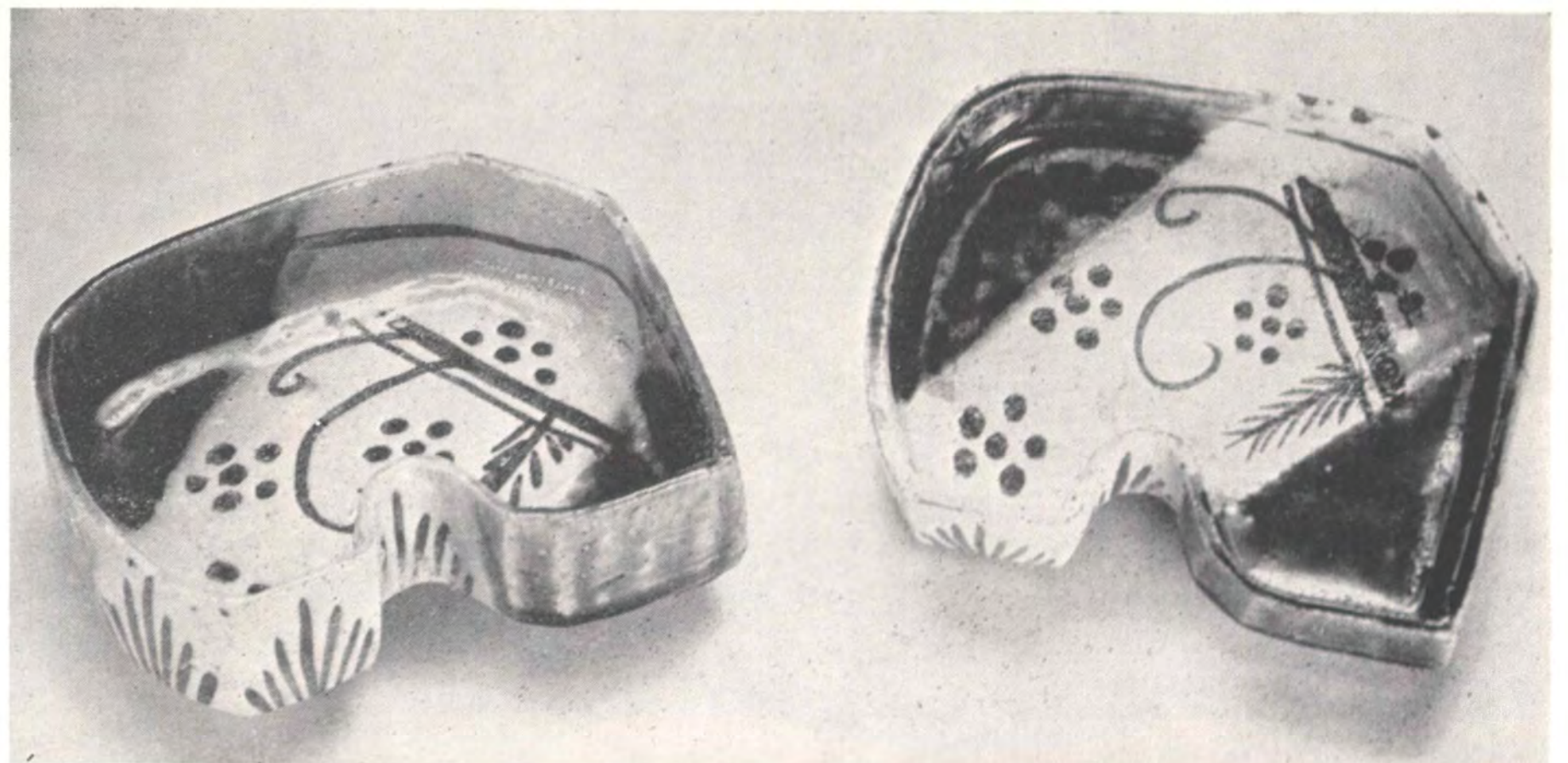
2nd half 17th century

Glazed stoneware, Oribe ware

1 7/8" high. 72-59/1-5

Gift of Mrs. George H. Bunting, Jr.

Oribe wares were first produced at the beginning of the seventeenth century under the guidance of the Tea Master Furuta Oribe, a man of unconventional and bold aesthetic sensibilities. Deformed and eccentric shapes, all irregularly molded, are characteristic of the Oribe sensibility. A blue-green vitriol glaze, arbitrarily applied to part of a dish, a keen sense of forceful, abstract pattern, and "naively" drawn grasses and geometric designs are among the hallmarks of this modern-looking ware.







Left

### DEEP DISH

Edo Period (1615-1867), first half of 17th century  
Early Hizen ware, porcelain with underglaze blue  
decoration. 15 1/2" diameter. 69-34/2

Gift of Mrs. George H. Bunting, Jr.

When porcelain finally appeared in Japan during the first half of the seventeenth century, it did so under the strong influence of Chinese ceramics, marked here by the motifs and composition. The dramatic drawing of the tree, its exaggerated scale, and the emphatic placement of the mountains all bespeak a uniquely Japanese feeling for decorative design.

Below—left

### FOOTED DISH

Edo Period (1615-1867), first half of 18th century  
Nabeshima ware, porcelain with underglaze blue and over-  
glaze polychrome enamel decoration. 7 7/8" diameter. 63-6

Below—right

### FOOTED DISH

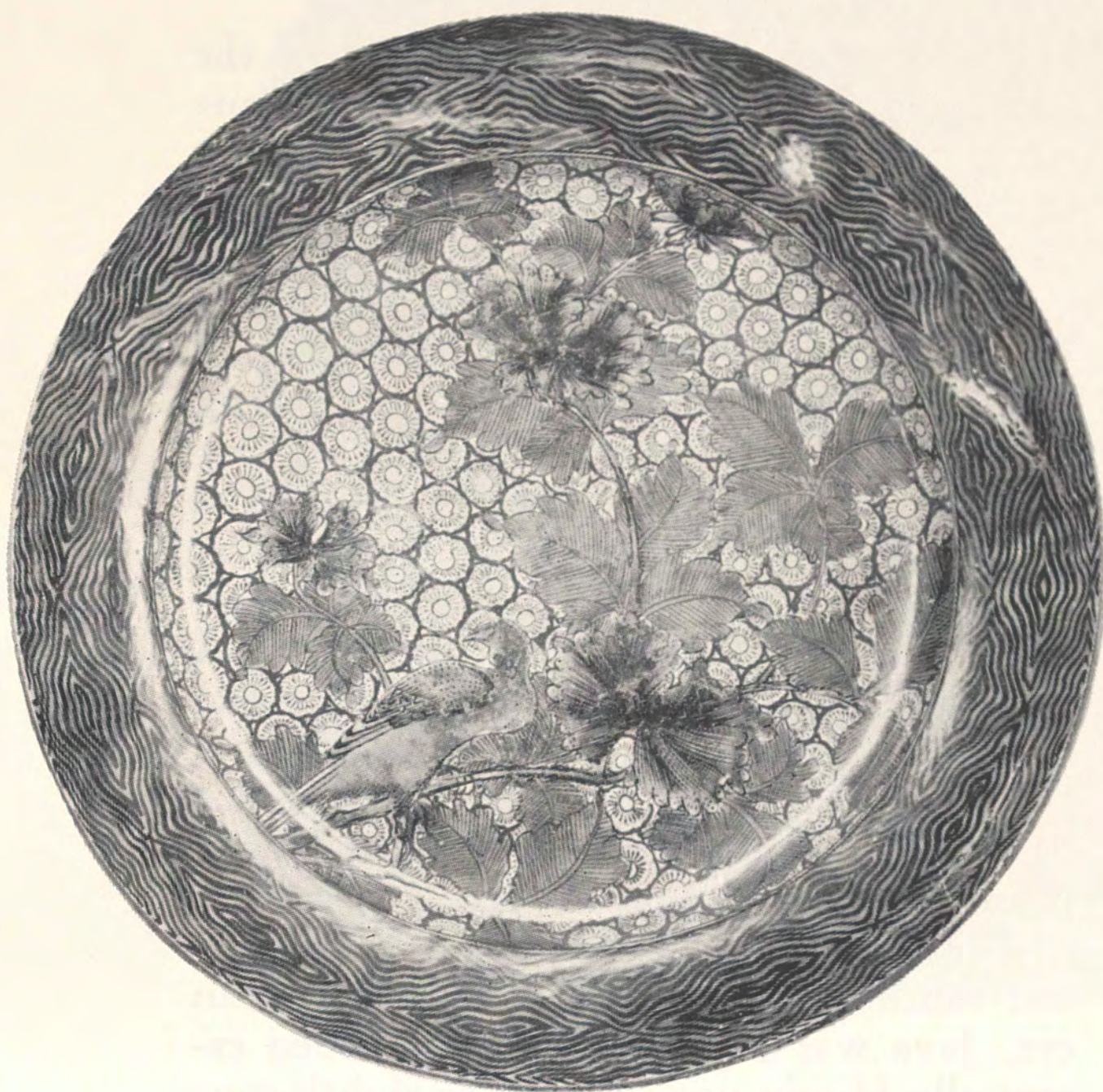
Edo Period (1615-1867), first half of 18th century  
Nabeshima ware, porcelain with underglaze blue decoration  
and celadon green glaze. 7 7/8" diameter. 68-49/4

Gift of Mrs. George H. Bunting, Jr.

Nabeshima wares were produced under guarded secrecy for the exclusive use of the Nabeshima clan. Made of fine, white clay, with clear glazes and elegant enamel colors, Nabeshima wares maintained a consistently high quality of finish and freshness of decorative invention that wedded realistic motifs to a strongly patterned, ornamental context.







#### DEEP DISH WITH DESIGN OF BIRD AND PEONIES

Edo Period (1615-1867), late 17th-early 18th century

*Ao Kutani* ware, porcelain with polychrome enamel glazes

17 $\frac{7}{8}$ " diameter. 64-28

*Ao* (green) *Kutani* ware is characterized by bold, heavy shapes, thick potting, and a palette of dissonant enamel colors in which green predominates. Despite the saturation of the hues, the colors remain a bit turbid, and rhythms of design and drawing, slightly sluggish.



#### LARGE PLATE WITH LEAF DESIGN

Edo Period (1615-1867), early 18th century

*Arita* ware, white porcelain with underglaze blue decoration. 15 $\frac{3}{8}$ " diameter. 63-4

The positive-negative alternation of blue and white from leaf to leaf, the exaggeration of the scale of the spined leaves, and the knowing accommodation of the insistently patterned designs to the shape of the plate make this piece one of the boldest and most satisfying from the heyday of *Arita* production.

Right

#### BOWL WITH DESIGN OF MAPLE AND CHERRY BLOSSOMS

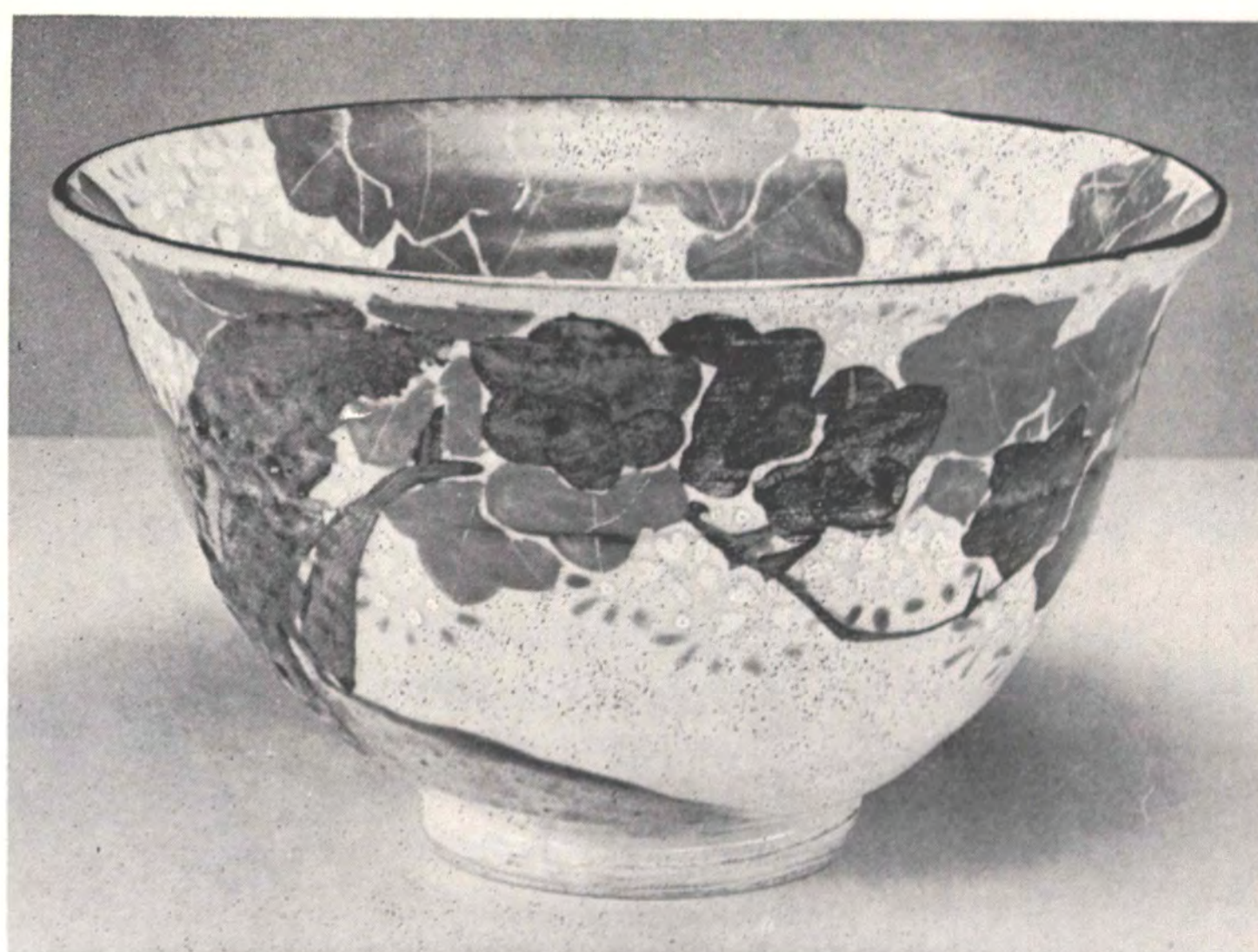
Nin'ami Dohachi (1783-1855)

Edo Period (1615-1867)

Kyoto ware, porcelaneous stoneware, with underglaze iron-oxide and overglaze enamel decoration. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter. 69-21/1

Gift of Mr. W. M. Ittmann, Jr.

Working in a period of refinement of earlier inventions, Dohachi carried on the tradition of Kenzan's enamel decoration with forcefully patterned motifs disposed across the surface in an elegantly abstract manner. The decor seen on this bowl was much favored by Kenzan and Dohachi.





# India and Indian Asia

In the Indus valley at Mohenjo-daru and at Harappa in the Punjab, an advanced culture with great cities flourished from about 2500 B.C., until the Aryan invasion, around 1500 B.C., drove the Dravidians of the Indus valley culture south into the Deccan and ushered into the region the great age of the Vedas. The Aryans brought with them forms of ritual worship and gods which, modified and combined with older native Dravidian concepts, especially fertility deities, became part of later Hinduism.

Following the conquests in the East by Alexander the Great, in the late fourth century B.C., contact was maintained between the Classic Mediterranean world and northwest India, notably the ancient kingdom of Gandhara which occupied the approximate area of modern Afghanistan. From the late first to the middle of the third century A.D., there flourished in this region an art which might be described as orientalized, provincial Roman art in the service of the Buddhist church. Many of the images of the Buddha and lesser deities recall the classic Apollo type or toga-draped citizens of Rome. Whatever elements of Classic style penetrated farther into India from the school of Gandhara were rapidly modified to conform more closely with Indian ideals. This is evident in the sculpture of the second and third century done at the great center of Mathura, southwest of Delhi, where images in the local red sandstone possess a combination of spiritual power and physical sensuousness that is purely Indian.

The Gupta period, lasting from 320 to 600 A.D., is often called the Classic Age of Indian sculpture. All late Greco-Roman influence has been absorbed, and the images, imbued with an impressive quality of inner power, fully express the Buddhist ideal of super-mundane spiritual peace. The standing Buddha image and the Buddha seated cross-legged in contemplation—one of the supreme concepts of a cult image—both were perfected at this time, as were the types of the lesser deities, gently swaying on one hip. These Gupta forms of the Buddhist gods set the norm for all of Asia, and the style is reflected from Java and Cambodia to China and Japan.

Although Buddhism was for many centuries the leading religion of India, Hinduism was never completely extinguished

and was again supreme by the end of the sixth century. Buddhism remained dominant, however, in Ceylon and lingered on in Bihar and Bengal under the Pala rulers (730-1197).

The Hindu revival inaugurated the great Medieval epoch of temple building that has left some of the world's most imposing religious monuments in stone. The vast pantheon of the Hindu gods and the events of the ancient Hindu legends, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, cover the high towers and sanctuary walls with reliefs of the greatest exuberance. In such south Indian centers as Tanjore and Trichinopoly under the Eastern Chalukya and Chola (about 850-1279) rulers, the art of making images in cast bronze developed to a high degree.

The rich culture of India spread throughout southeast Asia. Early in the Christian era, Java was Indianized and remained essentially Hindu until about the eighth century, when Buddhism, actually introduced earlier, attained prominence through the conquest of the country by the Buddhist rulers of Sumatra. The Buddhist art of Java is basically derived from the Gupta style of India, but it is more gentle and less sensuous. The greatest single monument is the many-tiered and stupa-crowned temple of Borobudur, executed around the middle of the ninth century.

The powerful style of the Indian Gupta age also penetrated Thailand and spread to Cambodia, where it flowered into the great Khmer style. Here, where both Hinduism and Buddhism flourished side by side, the sculpture of the shrines and the palace-temples at Angkor Wat (first half of the twelfth century) and Angkor Thom (late twelfth century) took on the chiaroscuro of the jungle and a light, youthful quality that distinguishes it from all the other religious sculpture of Asia.

Early in the sixteenth century, Babur, of Turkic stock, founded in north India the empire of the Grand Mughals, of which the most celebrated rulers were Akbar, Shah-

Jahan, and Jahangir. The art of the Mohammedan Mughals shows a decided Persian influence evident in their palaces, forts, mosques, and tombs, such as the Taj Mahal. The Persian style also extended to textiles, carpets, and the miniatures of the Mughals and Rajputs in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. LS







Above

# SCENE FROM THE WANDERINGS OF BUDDHA

Gandhara, Kushan

2nd-3rd century

Stone (gray schist)

22½" x 36". 55-105

The sculptural remains of the Buddhist buildings of Gandhara are rich in bas-reliefs illustrating events in the life of Buddha. The exact subject of this relief is not identified. The crowded composition, deep cutting, and such figures as the soldier on the right echo Roman sculpture of the time of Trajan.

Left

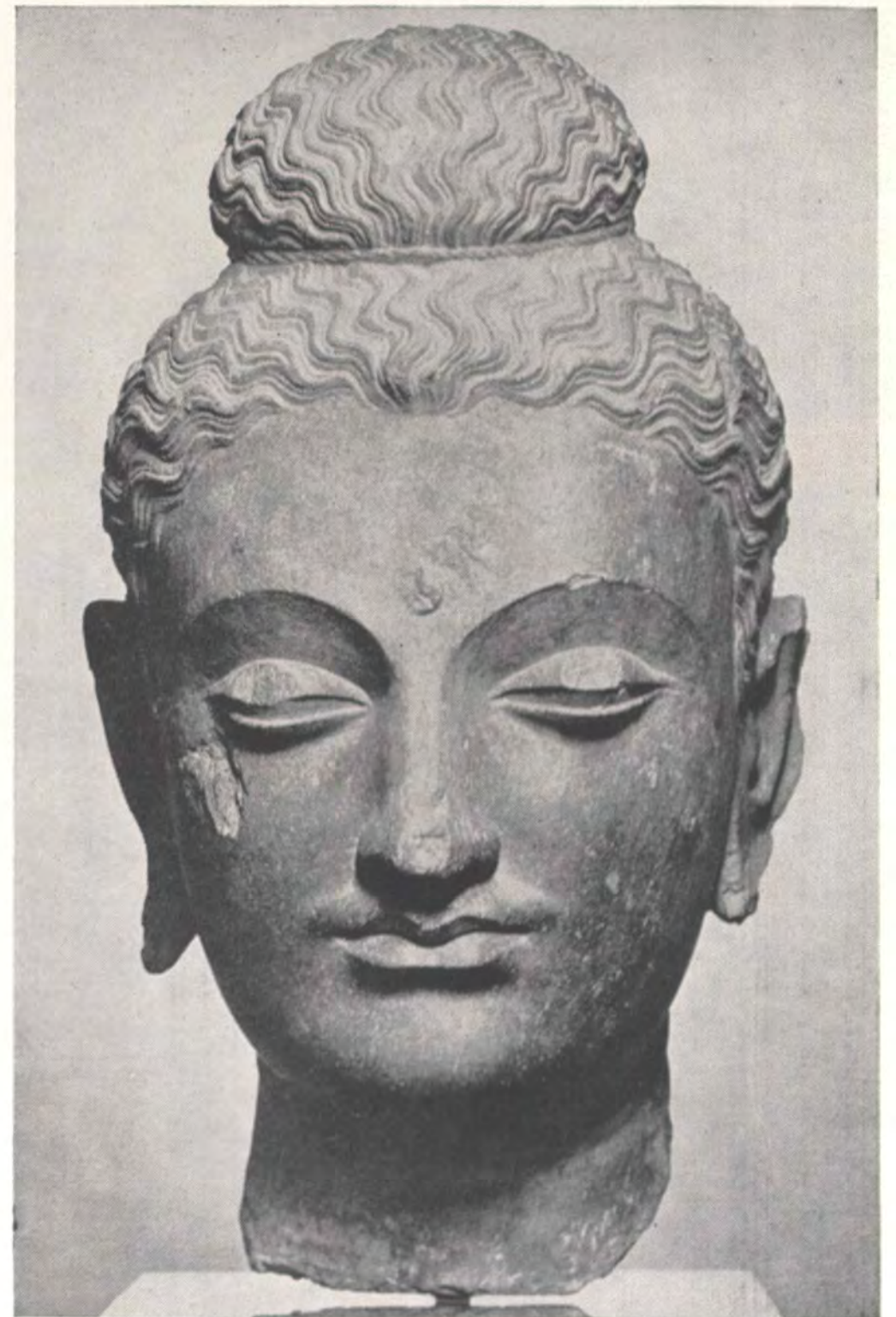
# IMAGE OF A STANDING BODHISATTVA

Gandhara, Kushan

1st-2nd century

Stone (gray schist). 55" high. 35-32

The folds of the toga-like garment are a linear pattern of ridges, and the partially revealed body displays the muscularity of a Hellenistic athlete. The hair arrangement and the necklace with animal head finials, like the robe, derive from late Classic models.



# HEAD OF A BUDDHA IMAGE

Gandhara, Kushan

1st-2nd century

Stone (gray schist). 19¼" high. 33-350

This noble head exemplifies the blending of late Classic naturalism, evident in the soft modeling of the mouth, and oriental formalism seen in the decisive linear treatment of the half-closed eyes and high, arched brows.







### A YAKSHI

Mathura, Kushan, 2nd century

Red sandstone. 18¼" high. 62-57

In the strongest contrast to the Kushan sculpture of northwest India, that followed a late Classic style, the second century sculpture of the school of Mathura in the Punjab derives from an earlier, purely Indian tradition. Particularly in the images of the Yakshi, female nature spirits, the Indian ideal of feminine beauty finds its full expression. These gently smiling goddesses of fertility, full breasted, one broad hip swaying, illustrate the Indian genius for expressing in terms of solid, plastic volume the sensuous rhythms of the body.



### A YAKSHI, PROBABLY A DRYAD

Deccan, about 2nd century

Bronze. 4½" high. 53-52

Despite its small size, this rare bronze, unique in Western collections, shows the same qualities of power and monumentality as are present in the great stone sculptured early Yakshi of Mathura, distinguished by their solid, simplified form and rhythmic disposition of masses.



Right

HORSES OF THE SUN GOD,  
SURYA

Mathura, Kushan

2nd-3rd century

Red sandstone

33½" high. 48-19



HEAD OF A BUDDHA

Mathura, Kushan, 2nd century

Red sandstone. 5" high. 35-305



HEAD OF AN UNIDENTIFIED  
DEITY

Mathura, Kushan, 2nd century

Red sandstone. 5¾" high. 51-32



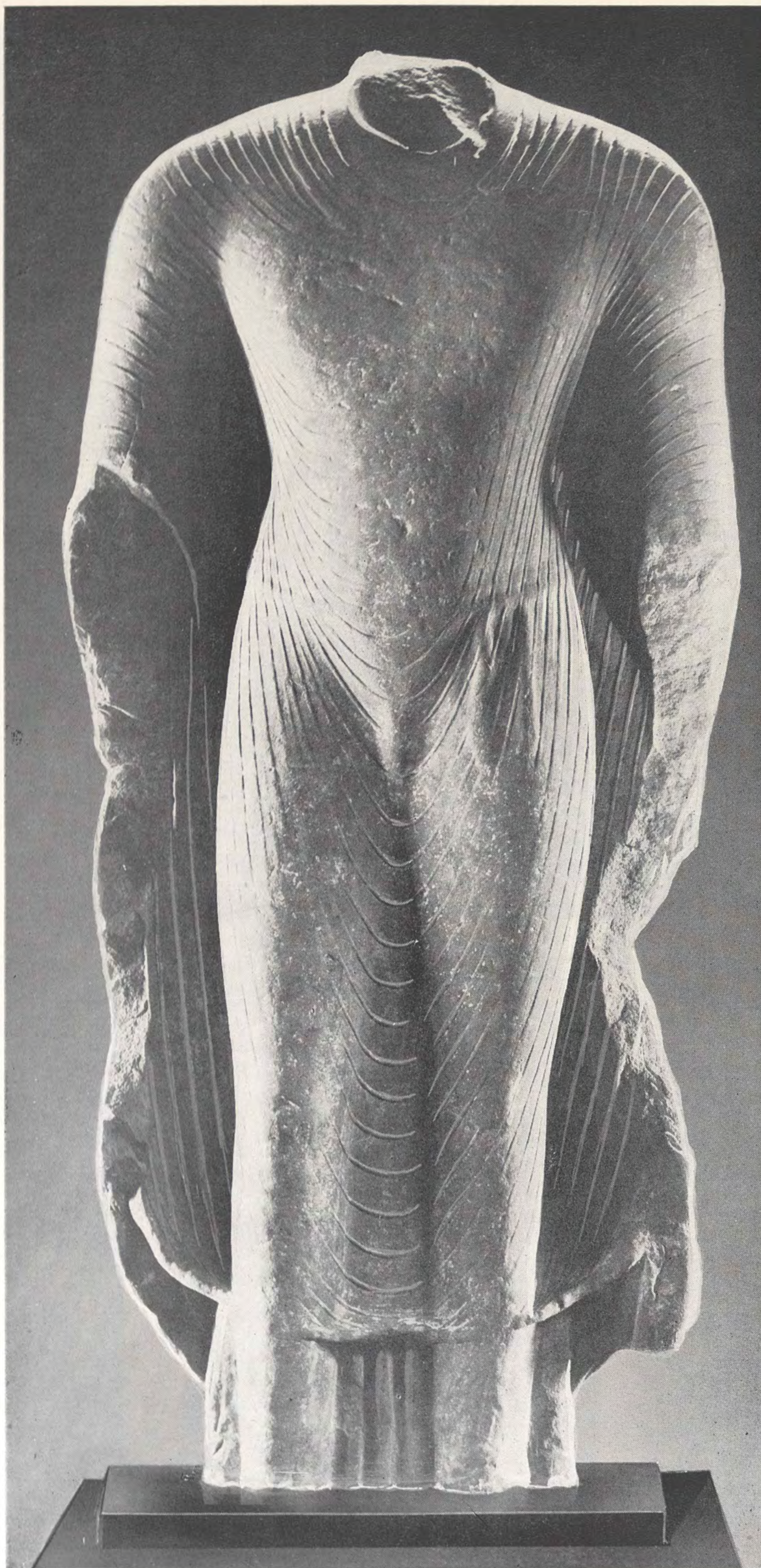
HEAD OF A BUDDHA

Mathura, Kushan, 2nd century

Red sandstone. 5¼" high. 35-306

The four examples on this page exemplify the powerful school of sculpture at Mathura during the Kushan period.





TORSO OF A BUDDHA IMAGE

Mathura, Gupta period (320-600)

About 5th century

Red sandstone. 45½" high. 45-15





Left

### TORSO OF A BUDDHA IMAGE

Sarnath, Gupta period (320-600)

5th century

Buff sandstone. 34" high. 39-19

The Buddha image as evolved in India during the Gupta period became the classic prototype for all of Eastern Asia and Indonesia. The figure on page 120 (45-15) is a supreme example of the high standard obtaining at Mathura in the 5th century. The drapery folds have become a rhythmic pattern of string-like ridges, following the contours of the body and descending in a cascade of repeated curves below the waist. The torso on the left (39-19), while of the same period, comes from the school of Sarnath and is treated somewhat differently. Here the folds have been eliminated altogether save at the lower edge and about the neck. The proportions are ideally conceived and set by iconic canons defining the divine character of the cult image.



Right

### BUDDHA IMAGE

Northwest India, Gupta period (300-620)

About 400

Bronze. 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high. 44-13

In this famous image some lingering aspects of an early Gandharan style are evident in the relatively naturalistic modeling of the monastic robe and the soft treatment of the upraised hand. But the noble face with its compelling expression of spiritual detachment is purely Indian and relates to the contemporary styles of Mathura and Sarnath. The figure was found some years ago at Dhanesar Khera, Uttar Pradesh, but it is not certain where it was made. It is one of a very small group of Gupta period images in metal that have survived into our own time.





Left

### HEAD OF A BODHISATTVA

Mathura, Gupta period (320-600)

5th century

Red sandstone. 24½" high. 62-26

The enormous power of monumental sculpture in stone during the Gupta period derives in part from a rigorous simplification of forms and emphasis on plastic volume. The full, rounded cheeks contrast with the almost flat forehead, and the face is dominated by the deep-cut, large eyes, shaped like the petals of a lotus, while the stark mass of the face is emphasized by the oriental richness of the crown.



Left

### SURYA, THE SUN GOD

Gupta period (320-600)

Probably 6th century

Bronze. 6½" high. 54-75

In contrast to the mildly naturalistic elements in the Gupta Buddha (44-13), this bronze image of Surya expresses the Indian norm of a deity in human form, but humanity reduced to a conceptual abstraction divested of all individuality or particularity. The god is identified by the two mirrors (one now missing) held in his up-raised hands.

Right

### BUDDHA IMAGE

Kashmir, 10th-11th century

Bronze. 10⅜" high. 51-55

A distinctive style of image was evolved in Kashmir, combining elements from both the Gupta school of Mathura and Sarnath and the Hellenistic tradition of Gandhara. In this image, naturalistic features of the latter style appear in the drapery folds about the neck and in the modeling of the hand held upright in the gesture of protection. Like most Kashmiri images the eyes and *urna* are inlaid with silver.







Above

#### UNIDENTIFIED DEITY

Bihar, Pala Dynasty (750-1200)

9th-10th century

Dark gray limestone with traces of gilding

23¾" high. 51-26

The figure may be a Naga (serpent) King, shielded by the cobra spreading its five heads above his crown. This image illustrates the high quality obtaining in the best sculpture of Bihar; the proportions are noble, while the jewelry, ribbons, and other details are executed with faultless technique.

Above right

#### HEAD OF A BODHISATTVA

Bihar, Pala Dynasty (750-1200)

9th-10th century

Dark gray limestone. 16½" high. 43-16

Although by the early middle ages Buddhism had been eclipsed by Hinduism in most of India, the former lingered on with marked vitality in northeast India. As in this head, the sculptors followed the great Gupta tradition but with a sharpening of the features and often rather dry execution. The loss in inner content is evident through comparison with the Bodhisattva head (62-26), from the height of the Gupta period.

Right

#### BUDDHA IN THE *Bhumisparsa* MUDRA

Bihar, Pala Dynasty (750-1200)

9th-10th century

Dark gray limestone. 25" high. 31-63

The fingers of the right hand touch the earth, a *mudra* (hand-gesture) signifying an event in the Great Enlightenment when Shakyamuni, attacked by the demon, Mara, called upon the Earth Goddess to witness his right to sit beneath the Bodhi tree at the pole of the universe.







ONE OF THE SAPTA MATRIKAS

Madras (Conjeevaram ?)

Chola (about 850-1279)

10th century

Dark gray granite. 25½" high. 44-27

The group of seven Matrikas are female deities called *saktis*, representing aspects of Shiva's energies. All of them are mothers of other deities.



Right

### DANCING FIGURE

Deccan, from the temple complex of Khajuraho

About 1000

Buff sandstone. 24½" high. 40-18

The great temples of Khajuraho, where twenty of the original eighty-five buildings survive today, are supreme masterpieces of medieval Hindu architecture and sculpture. The exteriors are covered with sculptured heavenly beings executed in almost the full round. This *apsara*, or divine maiden, is typical of the voluptuous, 'languid and calculated eroticism' of the dancers shown in every variety of pose calculated to reveal the maximum plasticity of the human body.



Below

### SHIVA AND PARVATI WITH THE BULL NANDI AND DANCING ATTENDANTS

Rajasthan. Later Chalukya (about 753-1190)

Mid-10th century

Buff limestone. 18" high, 33¾" long. 35-304

This high relief once formed part of a long frieze depicting the dance of the gods in the heaven of Indra. It comes from a temple near Sikar, dedicated to Shiva and dated by inscription to 970. Shiva with his consort, Parvati, both seated on the bull Nandi, are at the center of the composition. The rhythm of the dance, its steps, posturings and the momentary stance of a pause give Indian sculpture much of its life motion and compositional harmony.







Left

### SHIVA

Deccan. School of Khajuraho

About 1000

Buff sandstone. 31" high. 60-68

Shiva is shown holding a trident, a lotus flower, and a cobra in three of his four hands. Nandi, his bull vehicle, reclines at one side and an attendant bearing a fly-whisk stands at the other. The *tribhanga* pose—three bends of the body—is a typical Indian formula.

Right

### CHAURI BEARER

Deccan. School of Khajuraho

10th century

Red sandstone. 23" high. 59-14

This heavenly maiden with her fly-whisk stands within a niche and probably once adorned some architectural monument.



### VISHNU IN HIS AVATAR OF VARAHA, THE BOAR

North India, 9th-10th century

Dark gray limestone

8½" high, 16¾" long. 44-47

The Hindu god Vishnu is represented in a number of aspects, or *avatars*, among them that of Varaha, a wild boar. The body of the animal is covered with all the gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon, together with lesser deities who sought refuge on Varaha's back at a time when the Ocean overwhelmed the World. The plethora of deities, now somewhat worn, is successfully arranged in concentric bands that follow the contours of the body, while others are disposed on the cheeks, snout, and even inside the ears.





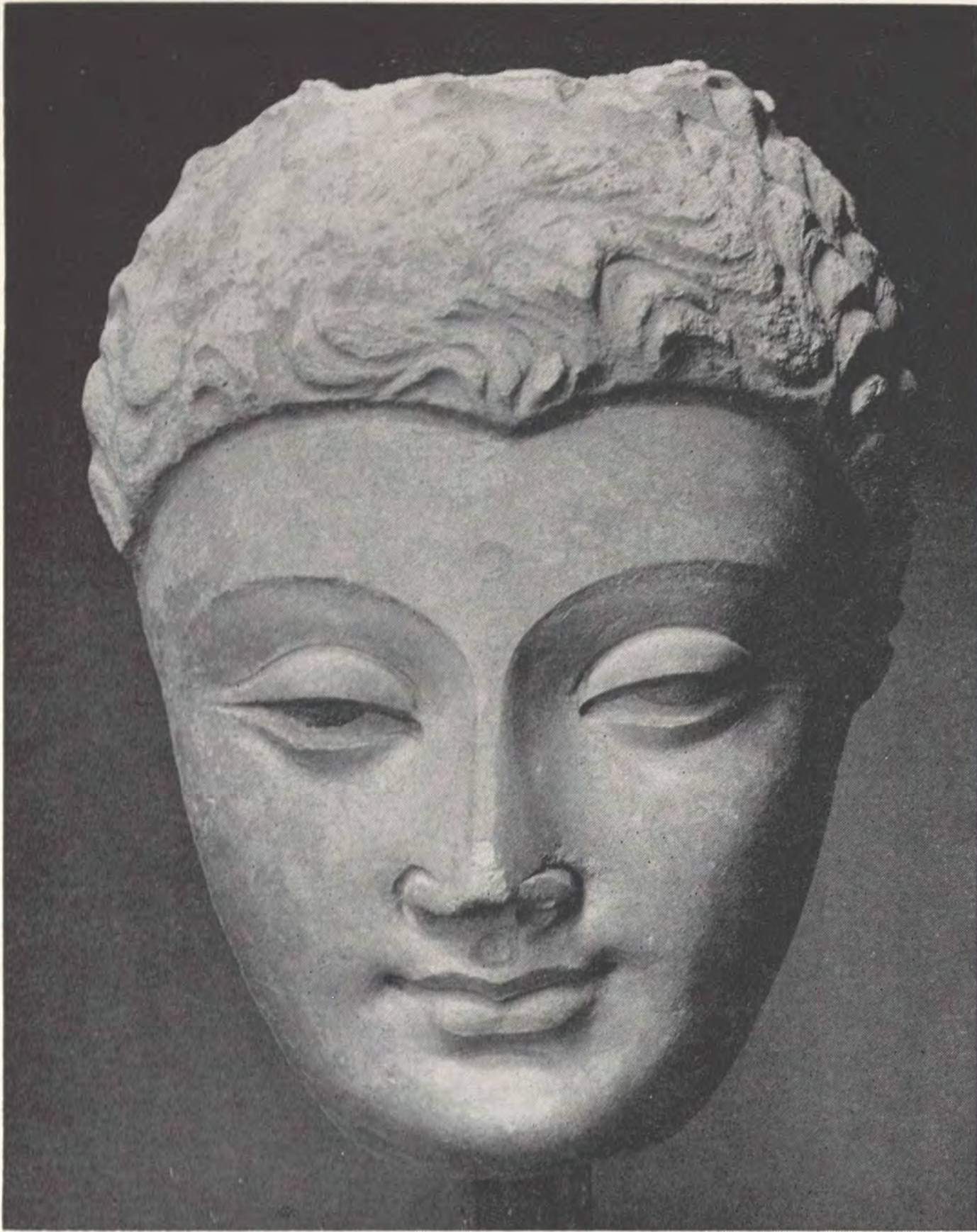
**MAHAGANAPATI, THE GOD  
GANESHA DANCING**

Rajasthan, 10th century

Light gray sandstone. 39" high. 70-45

Ganesha, the elephant-headed son of Shiva, is among the most popular Hindu deities because he is the god of wealth, bestowing success and fulfilling all desires. Here his bulky form is shown in the opening step of a dance, the toes of his raised right foot gently touching the ground. For all its mass, the figure is lightly and gracefully poised. Another splendid Ganesha in the collection is the bronze image, 62-14, shown on page 133.



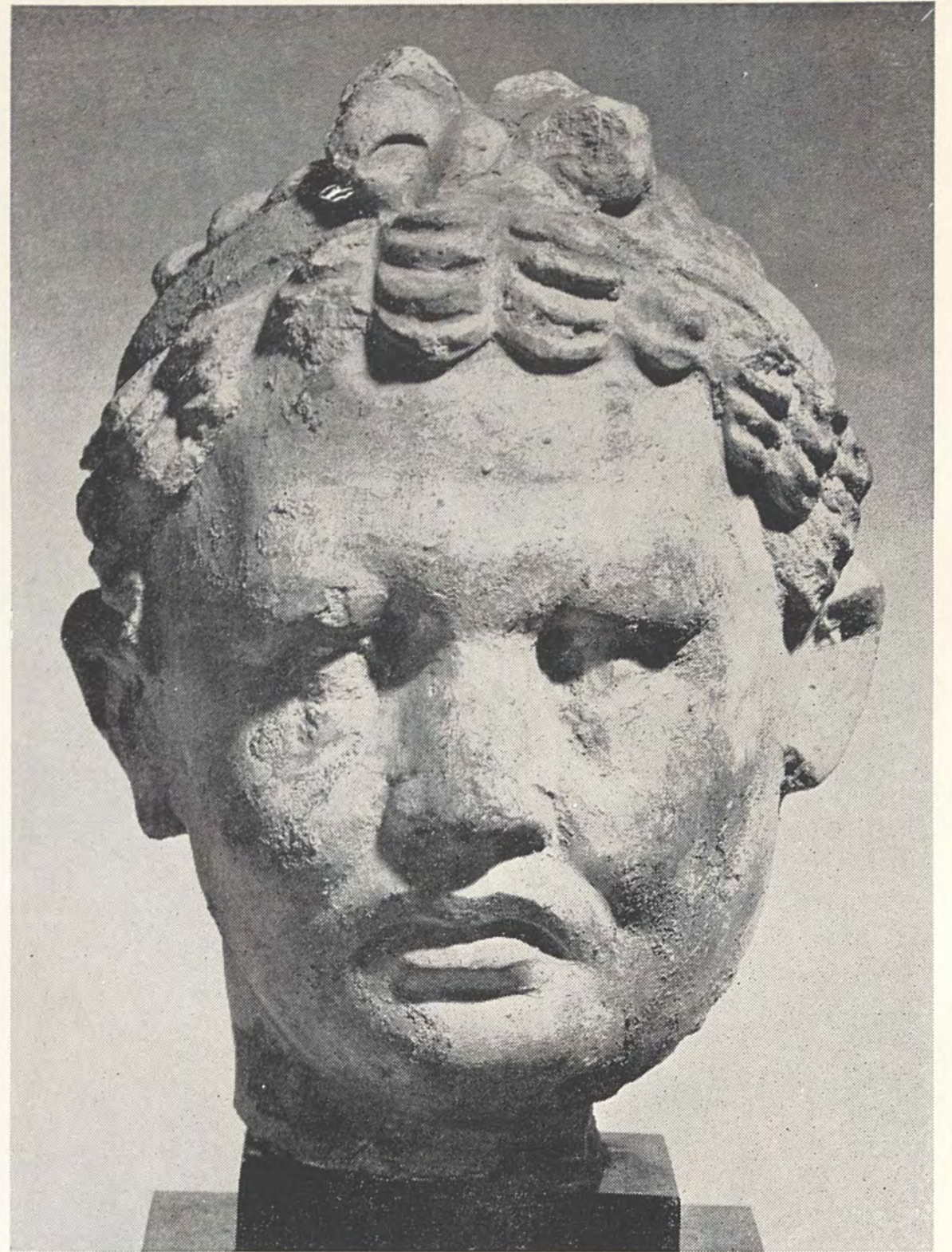


### HEAD OF A BUDDHA IMAGE

Afghanistan, 3rd century

Polychrome stucco. 7" high. 61-46

The use of stucco as a substitute for stone in the decoration of Gandharan temples was probably introduced into Afghanistan from Alexandria. This head retains much of its original color.



### HEAD OF A MALE DEITY

Afghanistan, 3rd century

Polychromed stucco. 6 5/8" high. 31-64

The deep-set eyes and naturalistic modeling are especially close to Hellenistic prototypes.



Left

### PATERA

Taxila (?), 1st-3rd century

Green steatite. 3 7/8" diameter. 49-8

Paterae, small cosmetic trays in steatite, are not uncommon among the finds of Taxila. They may well have been made in Alexandria and are frequently mildly erotic in subject, as is the case here.





Above

# FOLDING SHRINE-AMITABHA BUDDHA WITH THE EIGHT GREAT BODHISATTVAS

Central Asia, region of Chotscho (?)

About 850 to 950

Wood with traces of polychrome. 121¼" high. 44-18

The mixture of Iranian, Indian, and Chinese stylistic elements is characteristic of the cosmopolitan art of Central Asia. The four armored figures in the central panels to right and left are the Guardian Kings of the Four Directions.

Right

# HEAD OF A BODHISATTVA

Central Asia, region of Turfan, Bazaklik

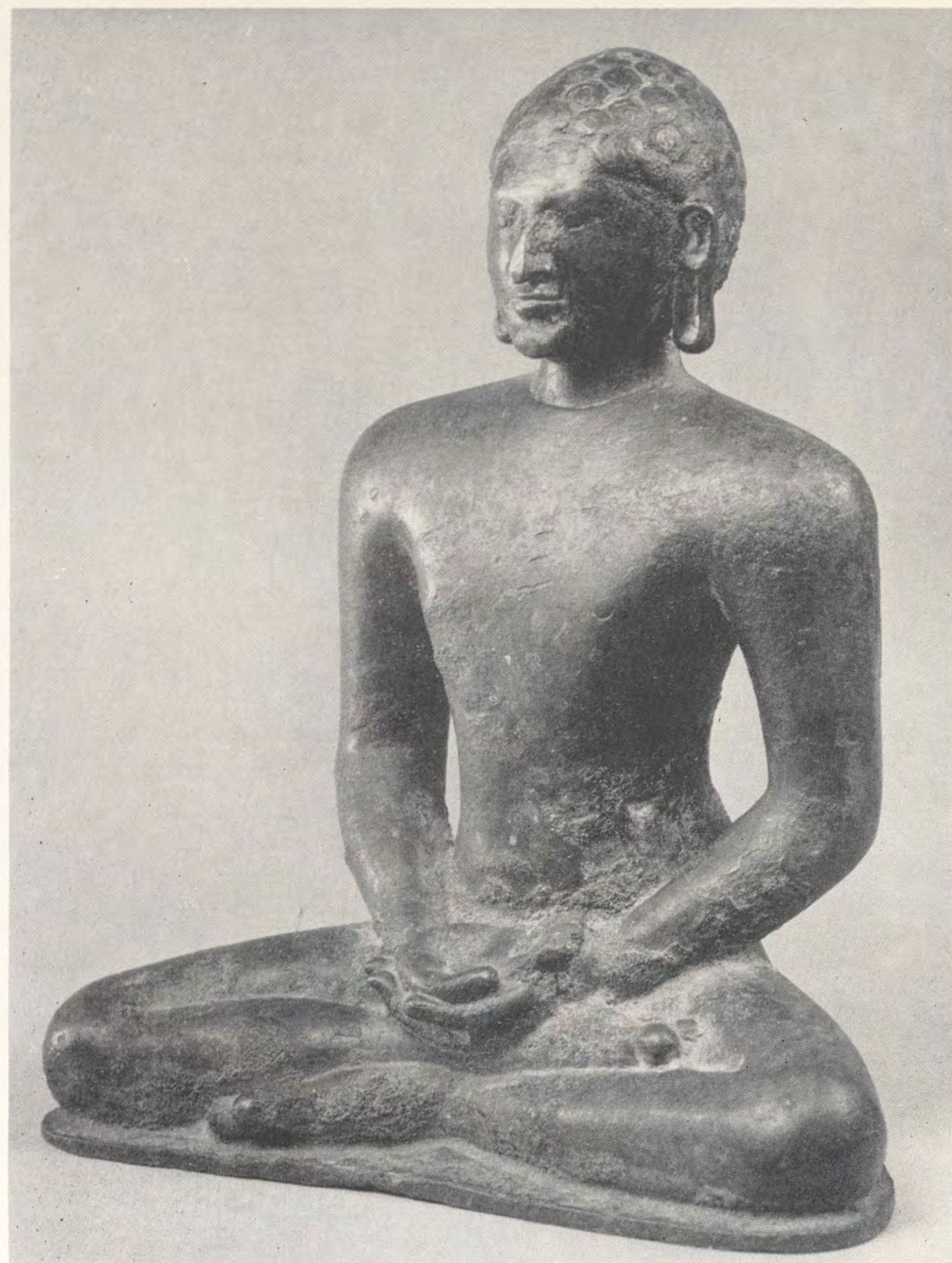
8th to 9th century

Fresco on clay. 17½" high. 43-17

This fragment, once part of a large composition, is painted in an almost purely Chinese style.







Above right

**JAIN TIRTHANKARA IN YOGA POSE**

Mysore (?), 8th-9th century

Bronze. 8¾" high. 62-49



Above left

**BODHISATTVA PADAMAPANI (HOLDING THE LOTUS)**

Madhya Pradesh, Sirpur. Pala Period (750-1200)

9th century

Copper with traces of gilding. 6½" high. 54-73

Below left

**RISHABHANATHA, THE FIRST JAIN TIRTHANKARA**

Deccan, 10th-11th century

Stone. 16½" high. 60-69





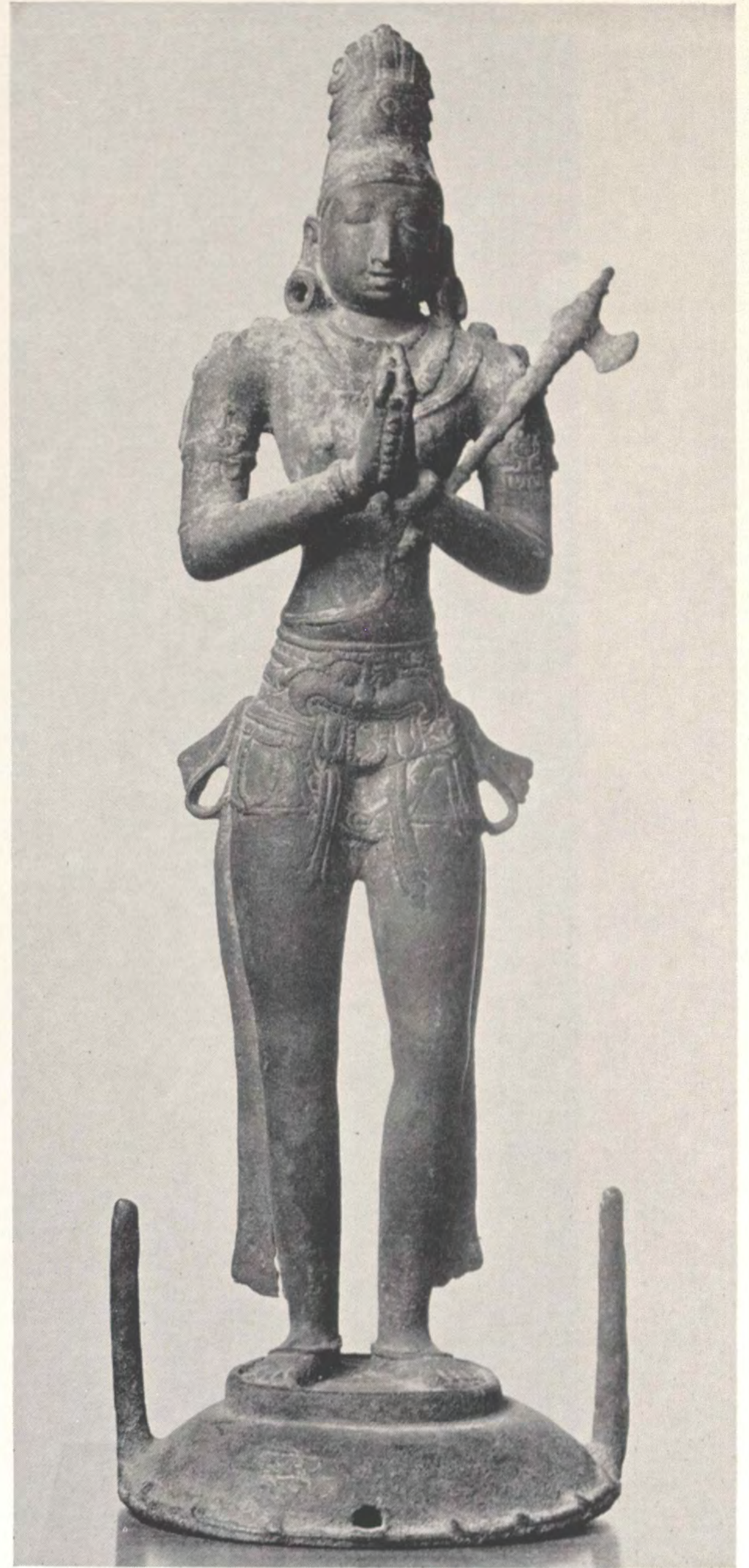
### SHIVA VISHAPAHARANA

Deccan

Eastern Chalukya, 9th century

Bronze. 19 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high. 50-17

Probably the earliest Hindu bronze image in the collection, this piece is of marked historical and stylistic importance. Details of the crown and the *dhoti*, as well as the facial type, suggest an Eastern Chalukya origin under the Andhras rather than the early Chola workshops of the region of Tanjore. In this form the Lord Shiva is shown as he is about to drink the poison engendered by the Churning of the Ocean.



### CHANDIKESHVARA

Madras, region of Tanjore

Chola (about 850-1279)

11th century

Bronze. 18 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high. 50-19

The slender proportions, simple and rather heavy ornaments, as well as the flange-like drapery along the side of the legs, suggest a date at the height of Chola artistic achievement. Chandikeshvara is regarded as the guardian of the property of Shaivite temples and carries an ax associated with Shiva.





KEVALA NARASIMHA  
Madras, region of Tanjore  
Chola (about 850-1279)  
11th century  
Bronze. 19 $\frac{3}{8}$ " high. 63-2

Narasimha is an avatar of Vishnu in which he is shown half-man, half-lion, a form he assumed in order to protect one of his devotees. Head and body are combined in a masterful manner, and the four arms, two pendant and two raised, are disposed in a perfect compositional relationship to the legs and crossed ankles of his special yoga posture.





# GANESHA

Madras, region of Tanjore

Chola (about 850-1279)

About 1000

Bronze. 23¾" high. 62-14

In this splendid metal image of Ganesha, the elephant-headed son of Shiva, the four hands hold an elephant goad, his right tusk broken off in combat, a sweetmeat, and a noose.





Above

**SHRINE OF VISHNU WITH  
LAKSHMI AND SARASVATI**

Bengal, Pala period (about 730-1197)

11th century

Bronze with gilding. 7 5/16" high. 63-3

The Hindu art of Bengal under the Pala and Sena dynasties evolved an international style reflected in the images of such widely separated countries as Java and Nepal. This small shrine for personal use is cast with the highest technical perfection, especially evident in the garland of flowers adorning the central image of Vishnu. The two smaller images on either side, Lakshmi and Sarasvati, are the two consorts of the god.

Left

**PARVATI**

Madras, region of Tanjore

Chola period (about 850-1279)

11th century

Bronze. 20 1/2" high. 50-18

In the images of Parvati, the devoted wife of Shiva, the Indian sculptor gives full play to the traditional idealization of feminine beauty—'at once the embodiment of physical desire and spiritual grace'. Since the exact manner of presenting the goddess was set by the rules of religious doctrine, the art of the sculptor did not lie in originality of concept but rather in the intensity of his realization. In this particular image the creative act of the artist is strikingly successful.





## VISHNU AND BHU DEVI

Madras, region of Tanjore  
Chola period (about 850-1279)  
11th-12th century

Bronze. Vishnu (left) 21" high  
Bhu Devi (right) 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high  
56-109, 56-110

Here the Hindu god Vishnu is shown in anthropomorphic form with four arms; in the upper two hands he carries a flaming disk and a conch shell, a third is raised in the gesture of protection, *abhaya-mudra*, and the fourth hand is turned down as though resting on the top of a club, which is another of his attributes not actually shown here. The female deity is Bhu Devi, one of Vishnu's two consorts. His second consort, Sri Devi, is missing from the set. In both images the details of costume and ornaments are especially rich and finely cast.





SHIVA

Madras, region of Tanjore

Chola period (about 850-1279)

Late 11th-12th century

Bronze. 24½" high. 61-7





# SHIVA (left) AND PARVATI (right)

Madras, region of Tanjore

Chola period (about 850-1279)

11th-12th century

Bronze. Shiva 16" high Parvati 11" high

34-8,9

Originally these two images, in all probability, were seated on an oblong bronze platform with a much smaller image standing between them. The composition would form a group of Shiva and his consort, Parvati, on either side of their son, Skanda (also called Subrahmanya) — an iconographic arrangement known as Somaskanda. In two of his hands Shiva holds his attributes, the axe and the antelope. Of the other two, his proper right is in the gesture of protection (*abhaya mudra*), his left, that signifying beckoning to come and receive (*abhaya-varada mudra*). Both hands of Parvati are in the *katada mudra*, a gesture of holding an attribute, usually, in the case of Parvati, a lotus in the left hand. In composition, in the knowledgeable modeling of the bodies, and in the technical finish, these relatively small images exemplify the high standards of artistry obtaining throughout the Chola period.





### DANCING KRISHNA

Madras, region of Tanjore  
Late Chola period  
(about 850-1279)  
12th-13th century  
Bronze. 19" high. 34-5

The child Krishna, darling of the cowmaidens, the Gopis, dances with delight after having successfully stolen a butterball from his mother's larder. He is among the most popular of Hindu deities, and no image in the collection has more immediate emotional appeal.



Right

### SHIVA NATARAJA

Madras. Late Chola (about 850-1279)

13th century

Bronze. 13 3/16" high. 50-20

Below

### SHIVA NATARAJA

Madras. Late Chola (about 850-1279)

13th century

Bronze. 33 1/2" high. 34-7



The Indian genius for expressing movement in sculpture derives in large part from the high aesthetic value dancing holds in Indian tradition, and it is the movements and posturings of the dance that inspire the imagination of the sculptor. Nowhere is this more evident than in the images of Shiva as Lord of the Dance—the supreme conceptual expression of Hinduism. Moreover, the Nataraja, in the words of Pratapaditya Pal, “. . . in purely visual terms remains one of the most satisfying of sculptural compositions. In a sense it defies the laws of balance and symmetry, and yet, by some inexplicable magic, it is eminently successful as a work of rhythm and harmony.”

The symbolic meanings the image conveys to the informed worshipper are complex, but in essence the Dance of Shiva symbolizes the eternal cycle of life: creation, preservation, destruction, and ultimate deliverance through union with the deity. The four arms display the powers of Shiva: the upper right holds the drum or vibrant rattle of creation; the upper left holds the flame of destruction; the lower right hand is raised in the gesture of protection or preservation of the devout; and finally the lower left points to the upraised foot that symbolizes escape from illusion, represented by the dwarf whom he crushes beneath his right foot. On another level the highly embroidered Shaivite legends recount the time, place, and circumstances of the Dance. The smaller image (above) is the more complete iconographically. It retains the halo of flame, now lost from the larger image, the cobra on the lower right arm and the wide flowing locks of hair. Here (at the left on the image above), is the mermaid Ganga, who once descended from heaven in a torrent of water which, to save the world from flood, Shiva caught up in the strands of his hair and directed into a channel that became the Ganges river.





**KARAIKKALA-AMMAIYAR**  
 Madras  
 Late Chola period (about 850-1279)  
 12th-13th century  
 Bronze. 16¼" high. 33-533

Nowhere does the Chola sculptor better display his imaginative powers than in this famous image of a female saint of Shiva. The emaciated limbs are disposed in a superb pattern of geometric angularity. One knee is raised and the right shoulder thrown slightly forward as though the saint were about to stand while tapping her cymbals in accompaniment to her hymn in praise of Shiva. Once possessing great beauty, she prayed to Shiva that it be destroyed so that she would not arouse worldly thoughts in others, and hence her hag-like appearance.





# TREE OF LIFE AND KNOWLEDGE

South India

Vijayanagar period (1336-1546)

Bronze. 24" high. 41-35

The beautiful and purely Indian design of this tree is, apparently, not known through any other example. The two cows at the base and the two monkeys perched on the trunk indicate that it may be connected with Vishnu. This god, or possibly Krishna, would be symbolized by the lotus flower protected by a five-headed cobra midway up the trunk. The fourteen bifurcated branches terminate alternately in lotus (?) buds and geese, the latter, symbols of knowledge.





Above—left

ILLUSTRATION FROM A *Kalpa-Sutra*  
(detail)

Western India, Gujarat

15th century

Color and gold on paper

Complete page 41¼" x 10¼". 35-176

The strongly individual style of illuminated Jain religious texts from Gujarat shows some influence from Persia, but with a very limited range of colors, mainly intense blue, dark red, and a lavish use of gold. The school flourished from the twelfth into the seventeenth century.

Above—right

ILLUSTRATION FROM THE *Khamisa* OF  
AMIR KHUSRAU DIHLAVI

Sultanate of Delhi Period

Second half 15th century

Color on paper. 10½" x 13½". 62-58

The page is from one of the few known works executed for the Muslim rulers at Delhi in the pre-Mughal period. The style has some elements adapted from the painting of Western India and via this source, the art of Persia, as in the sidelong glance of the eyes and the inner markings on some garments.



Below—left

LOVERS IN A PAVILION

Central India, Malwa

17th century

Color on paper. 22" x 18". 62-59

Painting at the court of the imperial Mughal rulers was naturalistic and strongly influenced by Persian miniature painters. In contrast, paintings from the Hindu state of Malwa, as seen here, echo the more abstract art of west Indian wall-paintings with little attempt at realism. The areas of vibrant, flat color—yellow, red, and white against a black night-sky—are employed in a quite arbitrary manner.





Above—left

### DHANASRI RAGINI

Deccan, region of Hyderabad, mid-18th century

Color and gold on paper. 13" x 9<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>". 31-131/7

The *ragas* and *raginis* are musical modes with themes set for certain times of day and particular moods. In both the music and the illustration of a *raga* or *ragini*, wide latitude of interpretation is allowed so long as the basic theme or mood is expressed. Here the subject taken from romantic Hindu literature shows a maiden separated from her lover passing away the hours by painting his portrait.



Above—right

### RAMAKALI RAGINI

Deccan, region of Hyderabad, mid-18th century

Color and gold on paper. 13" x 9<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>". 31-131/9

This miniature, like that on the left, is one of a group of four in the collection from a larger set, possibly thirty-six in all. They represent the school of Hyderabad, with soft, muted coloring, a naturalism derived from the imperial Mughal court, and rich flora and fauna.

Below—right

### KRISHNA PLAYING THE FLUTE

Rajasthan, Bundi or Kotah, mid-18th century

Color and gold on paper. 11<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>". 31-131/8

Lord Krishna, as the divine cowherd, stands beneath a tree where monkeys sport beside a stream with lotus and water-birds. Cowmaidens, the Gopis, stand on either side. The color is somber and rich, the mood subdued and muted as the notes of the flute sound under a sunset sky.







### THE HOUR OF COWDUST

North India, Punjab Hills, Kangra School, 18th century

Drawing, and slight color on paper  
6 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ ". 34-108

This unfinished miniature is of considerable interest in that it clearly shows the artist's preliminary drawing before the application of color.

The "hour of cowdust" portrays the god Krishna as a young man returning with his herdsmen at evening, when the Gopis are attracted by the sound of his flute. The state of Kangra, in the Punjab hills north of Rajasthan, produced what is, for many, the most important school of Rajput painting in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, specializing in themes drawn from the Krishna cycle.



### COUNTRY GATHERING ABOUT A SHRINE

North India, Punjab Hills, Kulu (?), 17th to 18th century

Ink on paper. 6 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". 54-82

The theme is a festival around a country shrine of a snake deity where a large gathering is engaged in varied and lively activities. In the lower right, a group of shepherds with their flock contribute pipes and drums; at the left, four girls are dancing to the music of strolling players. There is little coordination; each group is intent on its own activity. Some show strong emotion such as one of four *gurus*, carrying whips, who stands in the foreground, yelling at a bearded fellow holding a smoking ladle. But no one grants the slightest attention to the enshrined deity occupying the center of the scene.





# FOLIO FROM AN ALBUM MADE FOR EMPEROR JAHANGIR

Agra

16th and 17th centuries

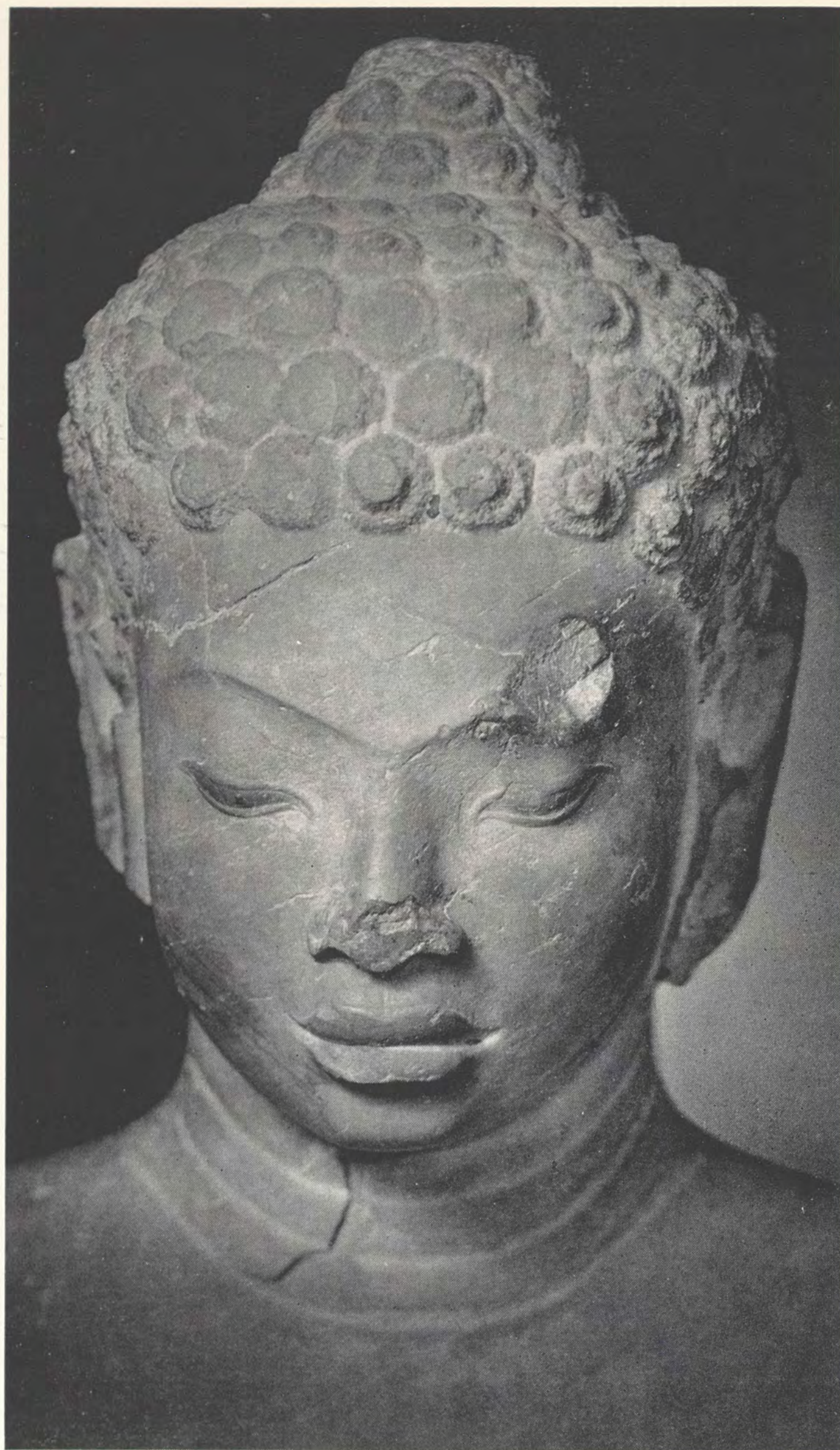
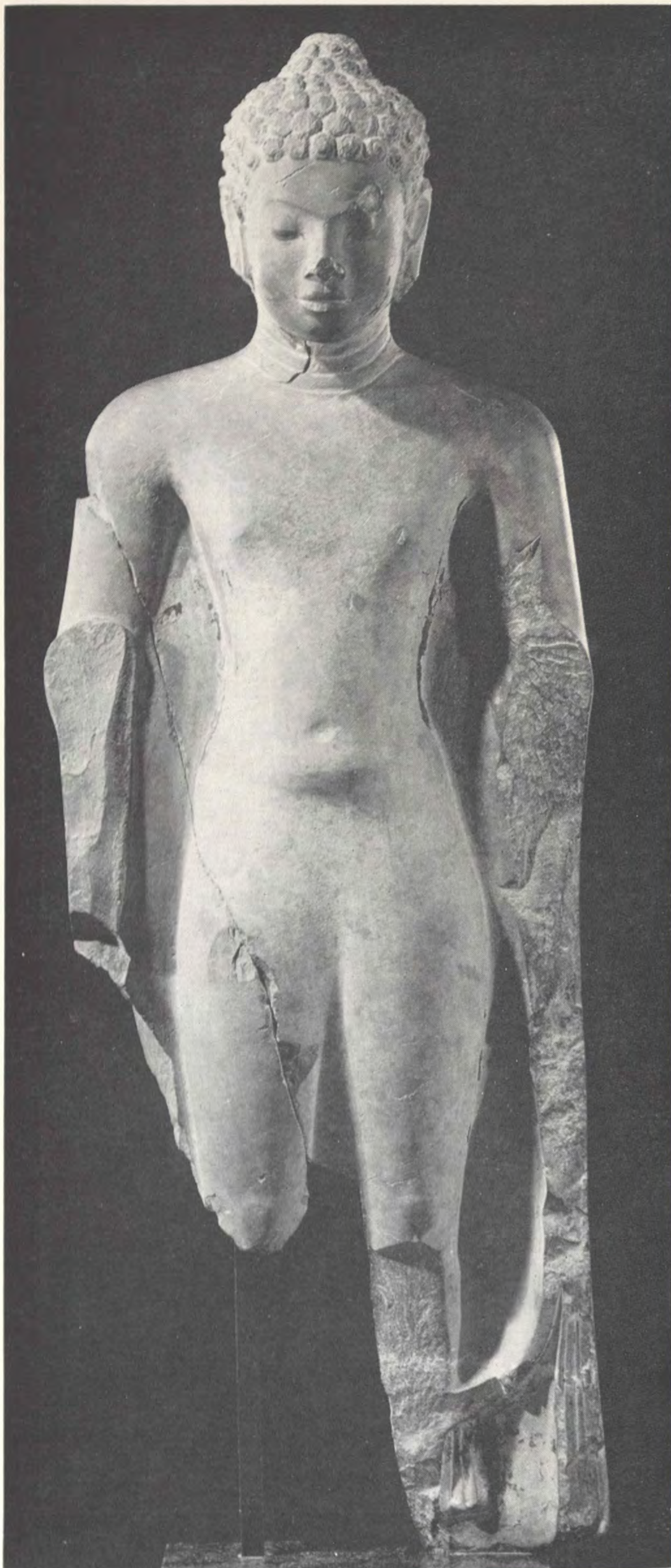
Color and gold on paper

16 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". 48-12/2a,b



The Mughal Emperor Jahangir was passionately devoted to the arts and collected paintings and calligraphy, many of which he caused to be made into albums. This and another folio in the collection come from an album known as the *Muraqqa Gulshan* because the major part of the album is preserved in the Gulshan Library, Teheran. On the page illustrated, the obverse carries a miniature painting of the Indo-Persian school depicting a hunter armed with an axe astride a fierce bull that has just impaled a tiger upon its horn. Above and below are panels set in frames of burnished and dull gold where, against a field of arabesques, are two carouches with doves in the lower panel and fighting cocks in those above. The outer borders are filled with wild animals in landscape painted in shades of gold, and birds in full color. The reverse of the folio carries a sheet of calligraphy by Mir Ali al Sultani dated 1537. Here the borders are richly illuminated with scenes of the hunt (detail lower right). The realistic figures in a stylized setting of trees and rocks are painted in shades of gold and light washes of color and may be the work of the Persian-trained court artist, Aqa Riza Jahangiri, done about 1610.





# STANDING IMAGE OF A BUDDHA (detail on the right)

Thailand, Chiang Mai

Dvaravati Period (7th-11th century), 7th century

Dark gray stone. 51½" high. 35-33

Before the advent of the Thais, the country now known as Thailand was occupied by the Mon people, whose most important state was the Dvaravati kingdom, which lasted from the seventh century until the eleventh century when it was overcome by the Khmers. The basic style of this image, with its broad shoulders and close-fitting robe, almost devoid of folds, derives from that of the Indian school of Sarnath during the Gupta period. But Mon genius has modified the formula. The broad face narrows gently to the delicate chin, and the softly modeled, slightly sensuous mouth echoes the rhythms of the whole countenance. It is a distinctly Mon, pre-Khmer concept of infinite elegance and spiritual content.



Right

### STANDING MALE FIGURE

Cambodia. Khmer, Baphuon style, 11th century

Gray stone. 28½" high. 46-34

The Baphuon was a mountain-temple built in the eleventh century at the then new capital of Angkor. The style is marked by moderation and restraint, and the sculptured images are expressive of plastic volume. Here, since there are no iconographic distinguishing marks, a secular figure may be represented rather than a deity. The hair in vertical striations and the vestment with close pleats and a curious series of pocket-like folds on the left thigh are characteristics of the Baphuon style.

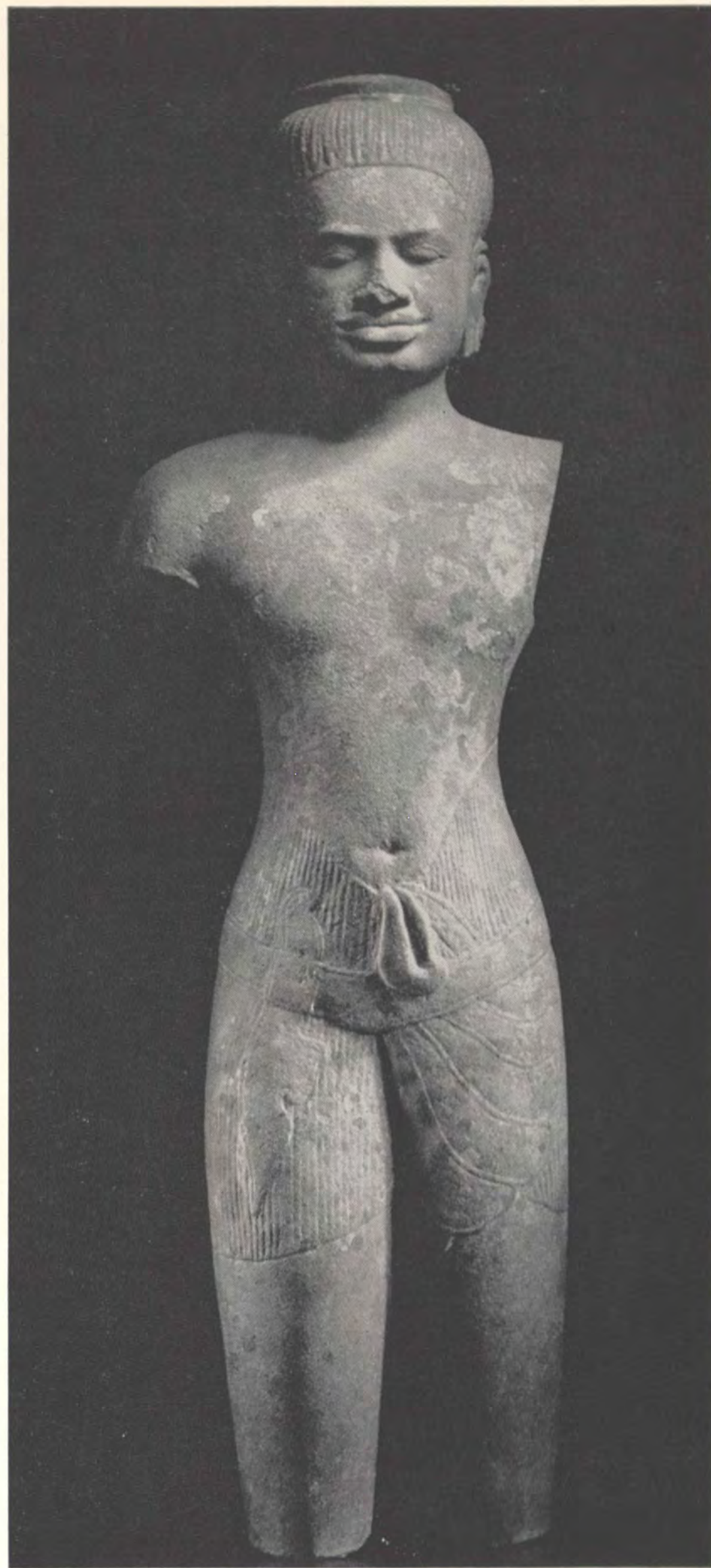
Below

### DEITIES CARRYING THE SERPENT VASUKI

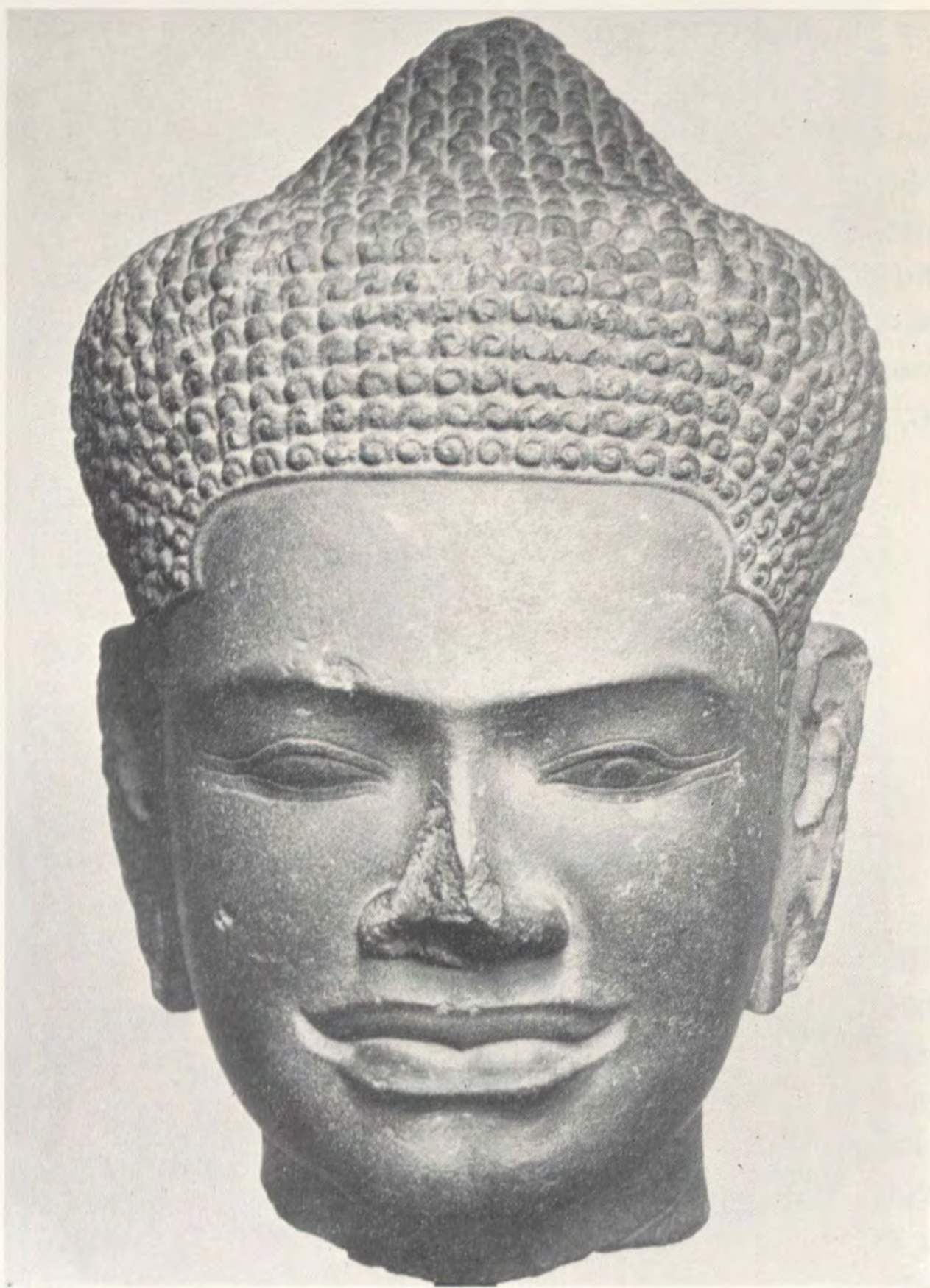
Cambodia, Khmer, Koh Ker style, 10th century

Buff stone. 30" high x 69" long. 48-18

The subject refers to a theme much favored by the Khmers, the churning of the Sea of Milk so as to obtain the divine elixir (Amerti). Mount Meru, the axis of the universe, was the churning pole which, at the bottom of the sea, rested on the primeval Tortoise, a form taken by the god Vishnu. The serpent, Vasuki, was used as the churning-rope with the gods pulling on the right and the demons on the left. The actual action of the churning is most frequently shown, but here the serpent is simply being carried, perhaps preparatory to the great event. The style is notable for its simple, broad surfaces, and dynamic quality. The long horizontal of the serpent ties together and contrasts with the rhythm of the striding legs.







Above—right

**FRAGMENT OF A LINTEL**

Cambodia, Khmer, style of Banteay Srei  
Second half 10th century  
Sandstone. 22" x 16 1/4". 49-20

Probably the central theme of a relatively small lintel, the Hindu god Indra rides his three-headed elephant, Airavata, surrounded by exuberant whorls of pierced and reticulated foliage.

Above—left

**HEAD OF A BUDDHA**

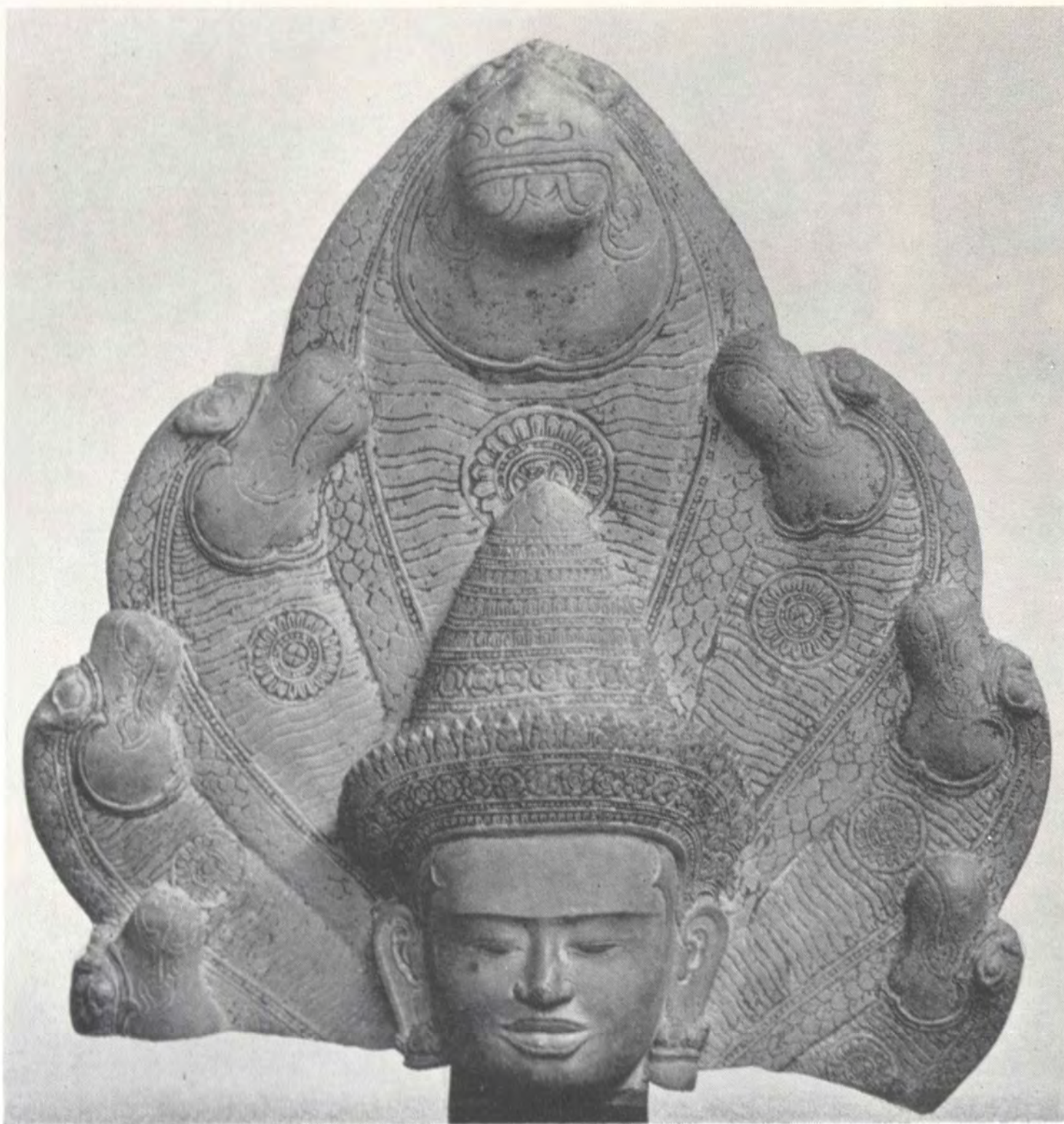
Cambodia, Khmer, style of Baphuon  
First half 10th century  
Dark stone. 9 5/8" high. 56-87

Below—left

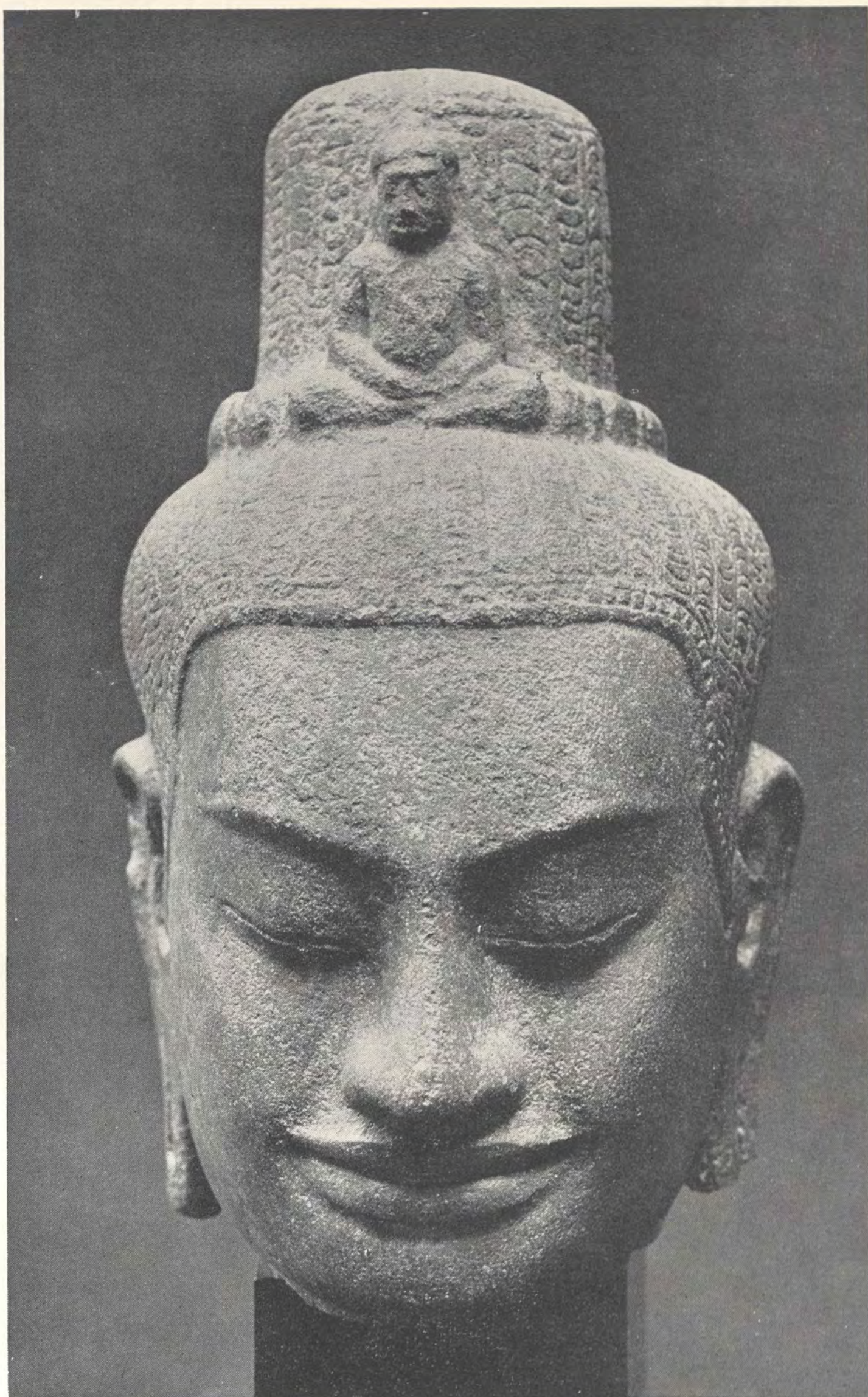
**HEAD OF A BUDDHA SHELTERED BY MUKALINDA**

Cambodia, Khmer, post-Bayon style  
Late 12th-13th century  
Gray stone. 18" high. 60-78  
Gift of Mr. Earle Grant

In this head of a Buddha under a seven-headed cobra, the last phase of the great Khmer tradition is evident in such details as the rather broad face and prominent ears.







### HEAD OF AVALOKITESVARA

Cambodia, style of the Bayon, late 12th-early 13th century

Gray stone. 16½" high. 30-34

The Khmer king Jayavarman VII (r.1181-1219) was a devout Buddhist and a fanatical builder, erecting more temples and palaces than all rulers who preceded him. The single most famous of his monuments is probably the huge mountain-temple of the Bayon at Angkor Thom. This head of a Buddhist deity typifies the best in the Bayon style. The forceful linear emphasis of the features in earlier sculpture is abandoned in favor of volumes that flow imperceptibly into one another. The gentle smile and lowered eyes give the face an expression of inward contemplation and almost childlike serenity. It is an expression unique in Asian sculpture and one that has come to be indelibly associated with the art of the Khmers.



### FEMALE DEITY, POSSIBLY LAKSHMI

Cambodia, Khmer, late 12th century

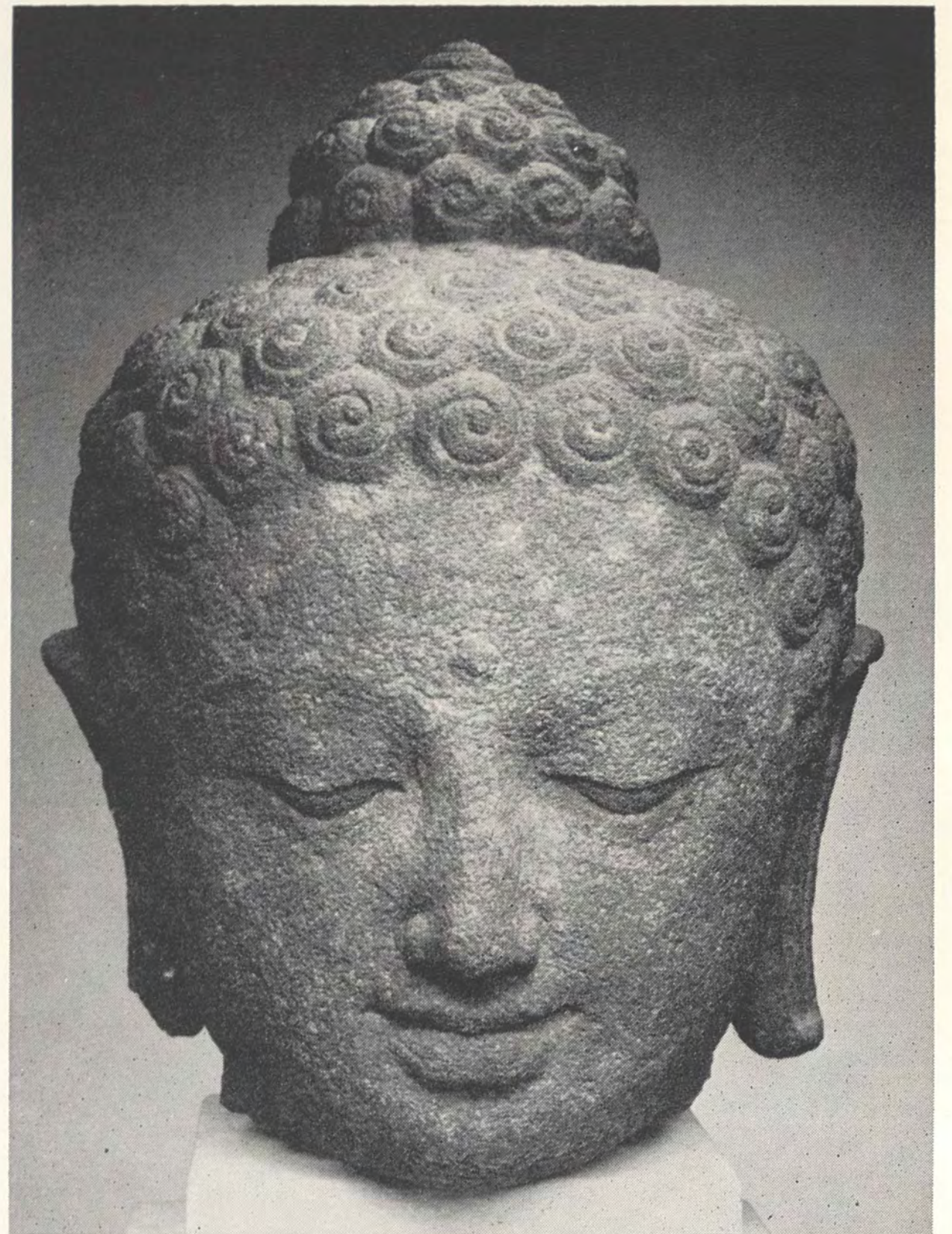
Bronze. 9¼" high. 39-9

This image is reportedly one of a hoard of seven or more bronzes found together, which included both Buddhist and Hindu deities.

The religion of the Khmers was syncretic, blending the doctrine and iconography of Buddhism and Hinduism with an admirable absence of bigotry. The attributes of this image make it difficult to identify, but since it matches well with an image of Vishnu, believed to come from the same hoard, it seems reasonable to identify the goddess as Lakshmi, the consort to Vishnu.



# Java



Above—left

## AVALOKITESVARA

Indonesia, Central Java, 8th-9th century

Bronze with traces of gold. 53¼" high. 57-42

The right hand is in the gesture of "gift bestowing", the left that of holding an attribute.

Above—right

## HEAD OF A BUDDHA

Indonesia, Central Java, style of Borobudur, 9th century

Stone. 121¼" high. 55-104

Although the exact provenance is unknown, the general style is close to that of the over 500 Buddha images once adorning the great temple of Borobudur.



Below—left

## SYAMATARA (?)

Indonesia, Central Java, late 8th-9th century

Bronze. 53⅞" high. 56-73

Syamatarā, the consort of Avalokitesvara, is represented with four arms. One hand is in the "gift bestowing" gesture, another holds a lotus.



Above—right

### BUDDHIST PLAQUE

Burma, 11th century or earlier

Stone (dolomite?) with traces of color and gold

5½" high. F72-12

Sakyamuni Buddha is seated in the center surrounded by scenes from his life and final entrance into Nirvana.

Gift of a group of members of the Asia Society, New York



Below—left

### AVALOKITESVARA

Indonesia, Central Java, 9th-10th century

Bronze. 5" high. 56-75

Below—right

### VASUDHARA, THE GIVER OF WEALTH

Nepal, 14th century or earlier

Gilded copper inlaid with stones. 5" high. 58-7





# Persian Art Of The Islamic Period

Native Persian kings of the Sasanian Dynasty (224-650) sought to link themselves to the illustrious past of their forebears, the Achaemenids. Images of heroic scale carved in the stone cliffs of strategic crossroads celebrated Sasanian kingship, while huge palaces, rich displays of gold and silver, and silken robes bearing heraldic designs significant of their own heritage recalled the glory of the past and certified the power of the Sasanian present.

In the seventh century, Persia was conquered by the Arab followers of Mohammad, founder of the monotheistic religion of Islam. Pre-Islamic Arabia, a culturally barren area, was the home of these crusaders, whose chief asset was an expressive and eloquent language. It was in Arabic that the angel Gabriel revealed to Mohammad the word of *Allah*. The Prophet, Mohammad, born about 570 in Mecca, could neither read nor write, yet he dictated in its entirety the words of the Koran, a profoundly philosophical and prophetic book, the only religious text written at one time.

Islam, which began as a religion, became a governing power by exploiting political and economic conditions. Arab tribes embracing the new religion embarked on extensive conquests and converted all those they overcame. Palestine and Syria fell to the conquerors in 636, Africa in 640, and Persia in 642. From these several cultures, ancient Semitic, Classical Greek, and Indo-Persian, the Moslems synthesized a new culture, with art forms meaningful to their adherents. Later their empire expanded to include North Africa (693), Spain (712) and, simultaneously in the east, Central Asia (711).

Democracy is the theme of Islam. Ideally all men are brothers. Their needs are limited: a mosque to serve as meeting place for the worshipping masses, a stand to hold the Koran, sometimes metal candlesticks and incense burners added for the ritual. Their simple homes required only a rug upon which to sit, eat, and sleep, and pottery for

their daily use. But the most serious work was devoted to the architecture of the mosque and to the production of the Book. Because of their reverence for the written word, calligraphers, painters, and book binders brought this art to the highest degree of perfection.

Edicts of the Koran, by indirectly prohibiting the making of figural art, promoted the development of decorative ornament of an abstract nature. The artists' elaboration of leaf-shaped designs was carried to such heights that today the world refers to these forms as 'Arabesques', after the earliest Moslems. The written word was widely used as ornament on building, metalwork, and pottery; sometimes the message is clearly written, sometimes it becomes abstract decoration.

Islamic art is tranquil, poised in organization and movement. It has clear color, with no dark overtones nor suggestions of sorrow. To the Moslem it is the song of simple men inspired by Allah to create. Men took the humble clay and piled brick on brick to erect vast vaulted mosques which dominated the countryside. From various minerals they made brilliant glazes for tiles to cover the wall surfaces with glowing colors. On fragile paper, for small volumes which could be held in the hands, artists made paintings, miniature in scale, which led the spirit through history, legend, and romantic adventures. The greatest homage was paid to the calligrapher, the skillful one, who could copy the sacred Koran. The precious words, whether carved on a building, cast in a bronze ewer, painted on a pottery bowl, or woven in a wool prayer rug, brought to the workmen—and to the worshipper who read these messages—the sensation of being in tune with the Eternal. It is this philosophical intent which deeply enriches the acclamation often accorded Persian art as being among the world's greatest achievements in the field of decoration.

LHC



DETAIL OF ILLUMINATED  
PAGE FROM A KORAN

Arabic language, Kufic style script

East Persian, 12th century

12 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 9 $\frac{1}{8}$ ". 44-40/3





Left

## BOWL

Persian, 7th-8th century

Silver-gilt. 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ " diameter. 47-47

A griffin, half lion, half eagle, heraldic in appearance, is embossed on a thick sheet of silver with additional marking engraved on the repoussé surface. The concave back of the dish is concealed and the vessel strengthened by the addition of a second silver sheet so skillfully joined to the decorated front that at the edge it appears to be one piece of metal. The entire front surface was originally covered with a gold wash, now largely worn away on the rim. The plate is one of the great silver vessels made for the court during the Sasanian period and the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries of the Islamic era.



## GOLD MEDALLIONS

Persian, Sasanian period, 6th-7th century

Cast and granulated gold

2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " high (2), 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high. 66-11/1,2,3

The three ovals are pendants with loops for suspension. Within borders of granulated triangles there are designs emblematic of the ruler. In one, the ram's head emerges from outspread wings, signifying his power and omnipotence. In another, the stag *en passant* wears the collar with fluttering ribbons, symbolic of the king's blessing and granting his dominion over the people. Third, the peacock, denizen of the Persian Paradise, suggests delights and the destiny of those who follow the monarch.



Right

### INCENSE BURNER IN THE FORM OF A LION

Persian, 12th century (Seljuk, 1037-1194)

Pierced and engraved bronze. 11½" x 10½". 51-5

Under the Turkish Seljuk Dynasty the art of cast, engraved, and pierced bronze was especially developed in the making of candlesticks and incense burners. The latter were often in the shape of lions or birds, highly formalized and with pierced and engraved palmettes and arabesques. The heads were sometimes detachable, and the bird head below undoubtedly formed part of a burner of which the body is lost.



Below—left

### HEAD OF A BIRD

Persian, 12th century (Seljuk, 1037-1194)

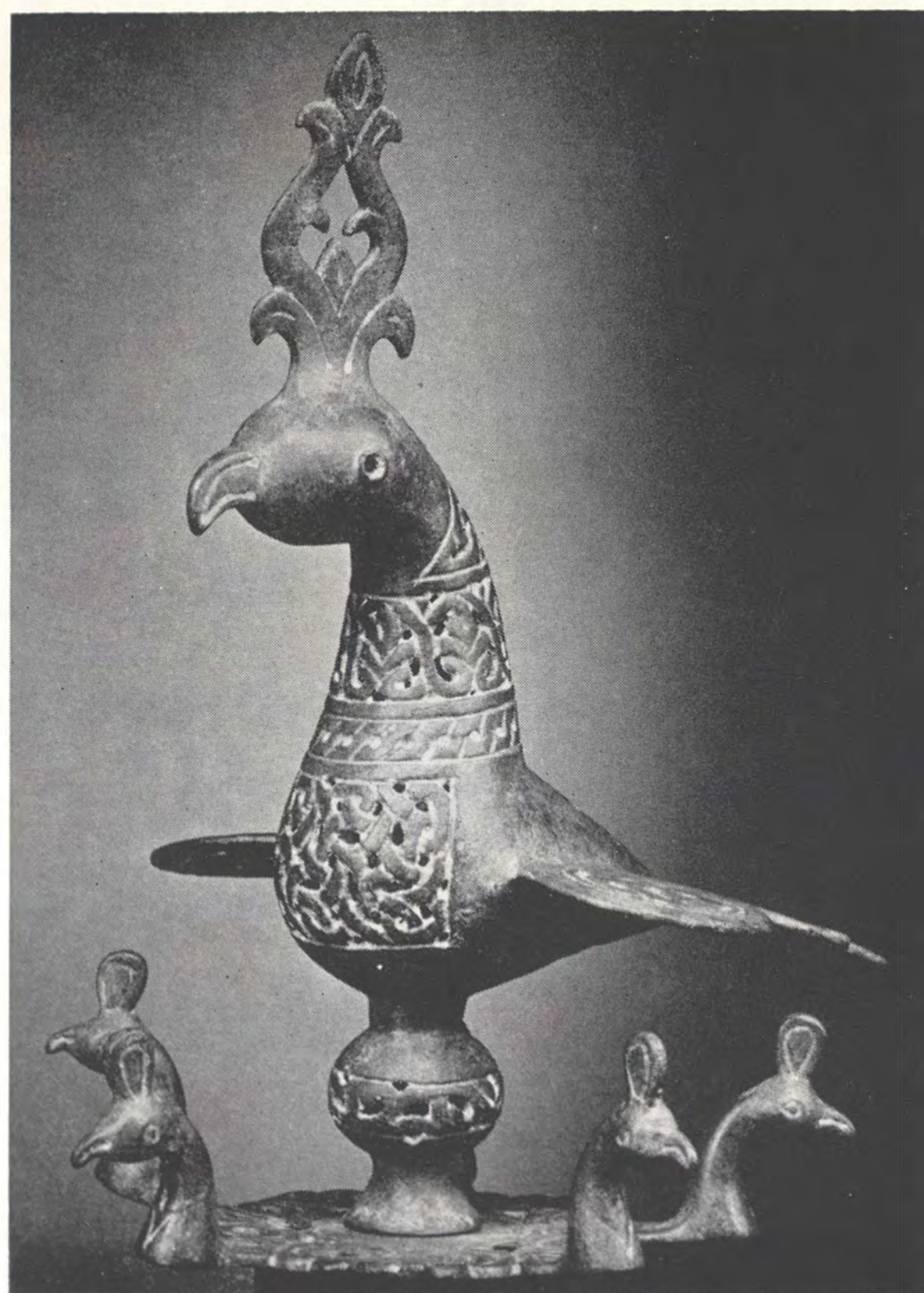
Pierced and engraved bronze. 7" high. 51-22

Below—right

### FINIAL IN BIRD FORM

Persian, 12th century (Seljuk, 1037-1194)

Pierced and engraved bronze. 8⅜" high. 54-20





Right

### KETTLE

Persian, Khorasan Province, late 12th-early 13th century

Engraved bronze.  $7\frac{1}{8}$ " high x  $7\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter. F70-15/8

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Milton McGreevy through the Westport Fund

In this cauldron of good wishes the upper band invokes prosperity, happiness, and good fortune. The central register reinforces the benedictions with the twelve signs of the zodiac: Aries as a ram, Taurus as a bull, Gemini as a harpy, Cancer as a crab, Leo as a lion, Virgo as a cross-legged figure, Libra as the balance with a bird underneath, Scorpio as a scorpion, Sagittarius as a harpy, Capricorn as a goat, Aquarius as a man drawing water from a well, and Pisces as two crossed fish.



Left

### CANDLESTICK

Persian, from Mosul, early 14th century

Brass, engraved and inlaid with silver and gold.  $9\frac{1}{4}$ " high. 51-6

The sumptuous candlestick of inlaid brass was produced when Persia was ruled by Mongol princes, the Il-Khans (1256-1353), at a time when metalwork attained a peak of elaboration and intricate design. In the candlestick the form of the socket repeats, in smaller scale, the shape of the excellently proportioned base. The design is successfully dominated by the strong, broad letters of the calligraphy, inlaid in gold against a background of interlocking floral scrolls in silver.





Left

**PLATE**

Persian, from Nishapur, 10th century  
Lead-glazed pottery, painted in green, terra-cotta red, and black, on mustard-yellow ground. 13¼" diameter. 53-10

Some of the pottery made during the ninth and tenth centuries in Nishapur is decorated with semi-abstract designs reminiscent of western contemporary art in pattern quality and distortions of drawing. The figures painted on this plate do not stand on a single ground plane, but are spaced over the vessel in a typically Near Eastern composition.

Below—left

**BOWL**

Persian, "Samarkand" ware, from Nishapur, 9th-10th century  
Lead-glazed pottery, painted in terra-cotta red and brown on cream ground  
9⅞" diameter. 54-79

Most of the abstract patterns on pottery from the region of Samarkand are symmetrically arranged. It was the potters of Samarkand who discovered that painted colors would not run underneath a lead glaze if the coloring agents were mixed with a fine clay slip.

Below—right

**PLATE**

Persian, "Samarkand" ware, from Nishapur, 9th century  
Lead-glazed pottery, painted in brown, with terra-cotta red, on cream ground  
16½" diameter. 54-80

The design encircling the inner rim of this plate consists of Kufic letters ornamented with motifs of palmettes enclosed within a border of braided strands.







Above

# EWER

Persian, Rayy, 12th-13th century

12½" high. 35-31/5

Turquoise glazed pottery with an all-over diamond design in low relief and painted in black, white, and gold.

Above—left

# PLATE

Persian, Rayy, 12th century

Turquoise glazed pottery

14½" diameter. 32-25

The design of two addorsed birds with turned heads, on a ground of coiling floral vines is carved in low relief, under a (finely-crackled) turquoise blue glaze. In the twelfth century, Rayy (five miles southeast of modern Teheran) was the capital of the Seljuke, a magnificent city, located on the main trade route across northern Persia. As a leading ceramic center it had hundreds of kilns in operation, until they were devastated by the conquering Mongols at the end of the first quarter of the thirteenth century.

Above—right

# BOWL

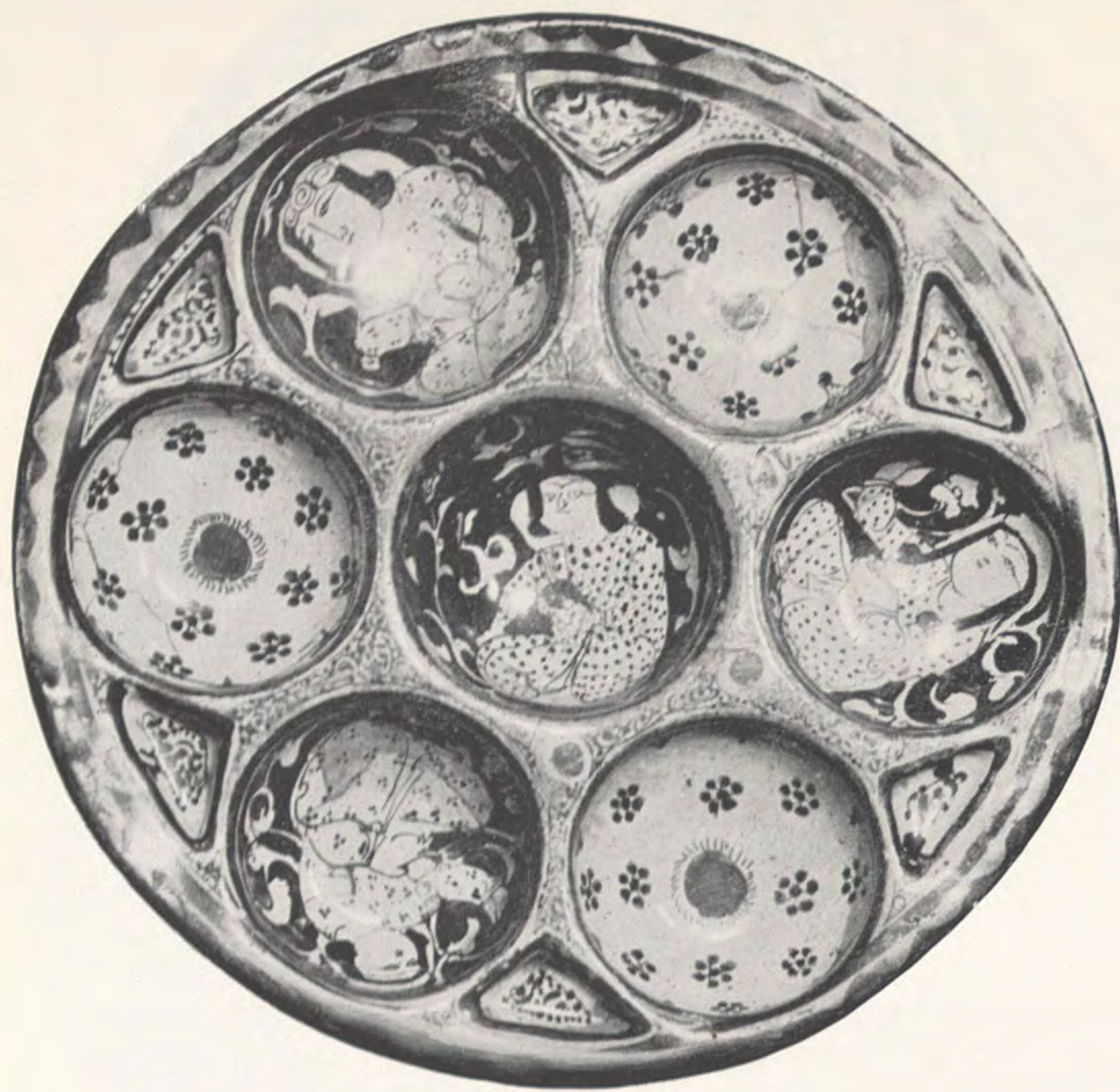
Persian, Kashan, said to be found at Gurgan, 13th century

Glazed pottery. 8½" diameter x 3⅞" high. F72-32

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Milton McGreevy through the Mission Fund

Deep bowl on high ringed foot, the interior covered with a white slip and then painted with cobalt glaze, leaving the design of lively arabesques reserved in white on the blue ground. The pattern is outlined and dotted in black. The exterior walls are ornamented with a running scroll pattern, each compartment enclosing clusters of three round fruits. This design is painted in underglaze blue with black accents. The entire bowl was covered with a transparent glaze now iridescent through burial.





Above—left

#### SWEETMEAT DISH

Persian, Rayy, early 13th century

Luster-glazed pottery. 12 $\frac{7}{8}$ " diameter. 32-110

In the top of this dish there are seven small hemispherical basins, four with seated figures against foliation, three filled with dotted rosettes. The interspaces are decorated with scrolls. To produce luster glaze a coating of copper oxide was added after the vessel had been glazed and fired. Then the pot was re-fired at low temperature.



Above—right

#### BOWL with Minai painting

Persian, Rayy, late 12th-early 13th century

Ivory-glazed pottery, painted with colored enamels and gold  
7 $\frac{5}{8}$ " diameter. 32-24

Rayy was the leading center of potters who, during the twelfth century, produced a porcelain-like ware delicately decorated with court and hunting scenes. Here, a courtier and four attendants sip wine while listening to musicians in a symbolically luxurious setting.



Right

#### BOWL

Persian, Kashan, 12th-13th century

Luster-glazed pottery. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ " diameter x 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high. 32-120/5

Two *houri* (denizens of paradise), one holding a wine bottle, are standing beside a pool filled with ducks. Their large figures and moon faces set off by halos are typical of early lustered bowls.





Left

# STAG, SERPENT, AND SIMPLE

Written by Abdallah ibn al-Fadl

Mesopotamian School

Dated 1224 (621 A.H.)

Page from a manuscript of  
*De Materia Medica* by Dioscorides

12<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" x 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>". 44-40/1

An early example of medical illustration, the painting shows a stag being bitten by a snake, together with the herb which can be used in treatment. The bulk of this manuscript remains in Istanbul, but dispersed pages are in museums and private collections in the United States and in Europe.

Right

## LEAF FROM THE KORAN, 80TH SURAH

Arabic language in Kufic style script

Persian, 9th-10th century

8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" high x 21" wide. 44-40/2

Kufic style script is characterized by its  
 angularity and horizontal connections.







TWO PAGES FROM THE *SHĀH-NĀMAH* (BOOK OF KINGS)

Above

**AFRASIYAB KILLING NAWDAR**

Persian, 14th century

Miniature painting in colors on paper

8 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ ". 55-103

Below

**RUSTAM AND ISFANDIAR**

Persian, 14th century

Miniature painting in colors on paper. 6 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ "

33-60

The *Shāh-Nāmāh*, the epic poem of the history of the kings of Persia, was written by the famous 10th century poet Firdausi, and illustrated throughout various succeeding epochs. The two pages here shown (from the famous manuscript, the so-called Demotte *Shāh-Nāmāh*) were painted in the era following the Mongol invasion and reveal a mixture of Chinese and Persian elements typical of the school of painting at Tabriz.







### THE ARMENIAN CLERGY

Persian, probably Herat, about 1425  
 Miniature painting in colors on paper  
 13 1/8" x 9 1/4". 46-40

Five bearded figures wearing "mortar-board hats" and robes of blue, pink, orange, and green stand in two groups under stylized palm trees. The page comes from a dispersed manuscript of the *Majma al-Tavarikh* (Compendium of Histories), a continuation and extension of the history written by the scholar-statesman Rashid al-Din in the beginning of the fourteenth century. The continuing text was written in 1423 (826 A.H.) by Hafiz-i Abru for Prince Baisunghur, son of Shah Rukh, grandson of Timur.





Above

# BIRDS AND BEASTS IN A FLOWERY LANDSCAPE

Persian, attributed to Ustad Muhammadi

14th-15th century

Tinted drawing. 6½" x 9¾". 43-6/2

In separate miniatures, not intended as book illustration, the subject matter and composition were less rigidly traditional. Persian delight in a flower-strewn field is combined with strong Chinese influence in cloud and bird motifs, and in the naturalistic rendering of the plants and animals. In the upper left corner, written upside down, is what may be a notation of a cataloguer: "the work of Master Muhammad".



Left

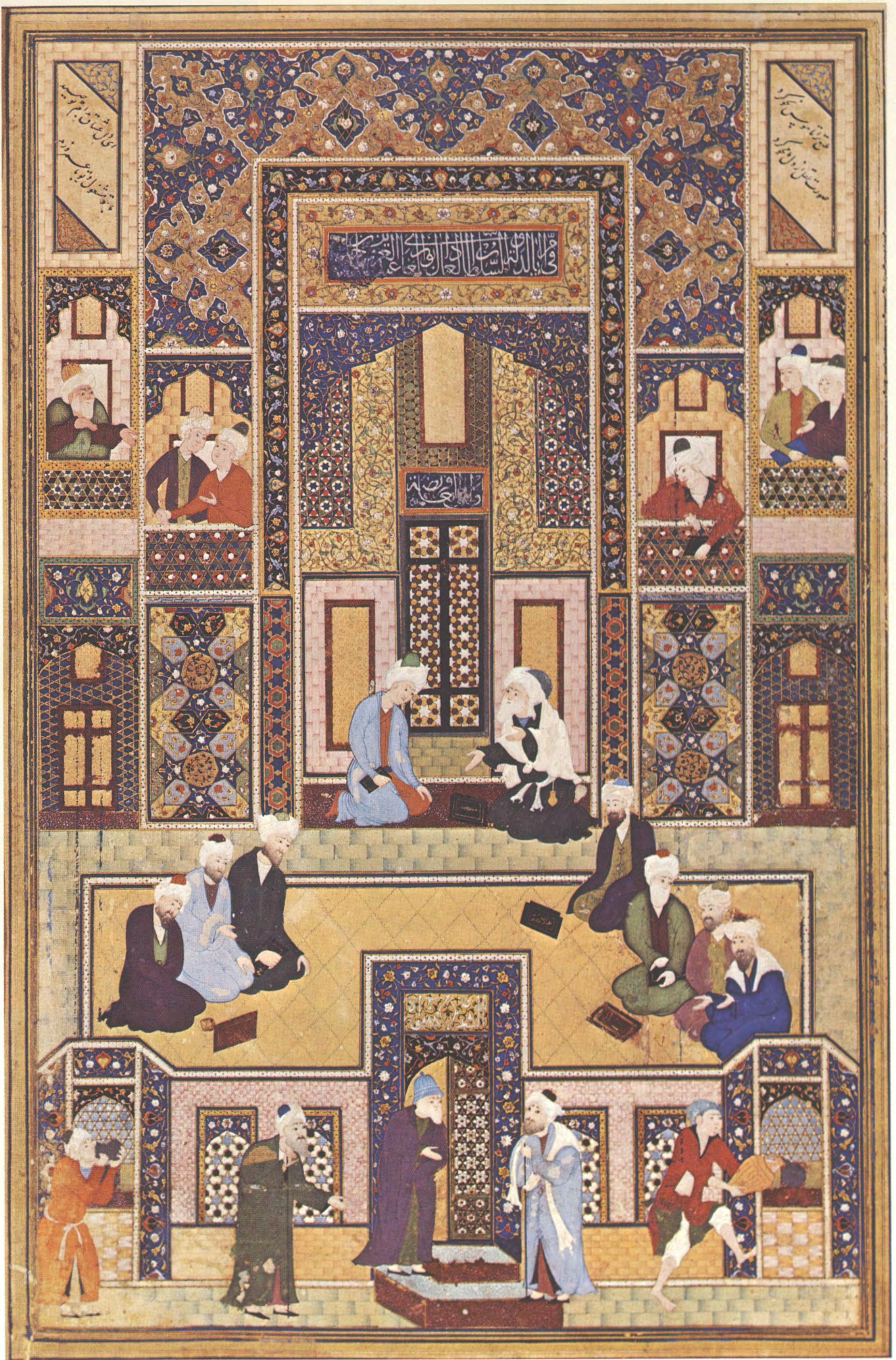
# HUNTING SCENE

Persian, 16th century

Color on paper. 7⅜" x 6⅛". 43-6/3

A Safavid prince and six gentlemen of the court are depicted in incidents of the hunt. Besides the three horses and dog in the court party, there are flower-spotted leopards, rabbits, and a dozen male and female deer.







## THE MEETING OF THE THEOLOGIANS

'Abd Allah Musawwir (active mid-16th century)

Colors on paper.  $11\frac{3}{8}$ " x  $7\frac{1}{2}$ ". 43-5

Page from a *Bustan* by Sa'di. About 1540-1549

In the late 15th and early 16th centuries there lived a man who added a new dimension to the range of subject matter in Persian miniatures by introducing themes of pure genre. His name, Bihzad, was destined to become the most illustrious in the history of Persian painting.

Bihzad was interested in the man in the street, in character study, in scenes of homely humor, and so his miniatures often depict scenes which combine these themes. Few works can be definitely attributed to Bihzad, but a whole school can be assigned to his influence.

THE MEETING OF THE THEOLOGIANS belongs to this latter group. It was undoubtedly inspired by Bihzad's "Beggar Denied Alms Outside the Doors of a Mosque", which is an illustration for a manuscript of the School of Herat, 1489, now in the Royal Egyptian Library, Cairo.

Our miniature is an architectural scene, inside and outside a mosque. A young man listens intently to his teacher, while seven bearded gentlemen sit quietly conversing with individual gestures expressing their emotions. Through four windows one sees

other men talking or watching the scene below. In front of the mosque, another theologian approaches the door, while two beggars on his left extend their hands in a plea for a share of his simple fortune. To the right, a youth prepares for the symbolical washing of the feet before entering the holy building. At the left, another drinks from a jar.

It is possible to date this miniature within a decade. Above the central door there is an inscription which reads: "In the days of government of the just Sultan Abu'l-Ghāzī 'Abd al-'Aziz . ." This ruler reigned in Bukhara from 1540 to 1549. The painting is also signed by the artist: "'Abd Allah Musawwir", whose signature appears on the book above the upper right corner of the entrance door to the mosque.

As in real life of Persia, the mosque dominates the visual presence of the scene. The elaborate tile mosaics include a variety of arabesques and geometric designs in large and small patterns. The great range of color in minute contrasting areas gives sparkle and vigor to the scene. The effect is not unlike a jewel, the tiny patches of color replacing the facets on a gem.





Above—left

**COUPLE STANDING AMONG FLOWERING TREES**

Persian, Herat, about 1430-1440

Miniature painting in colors on paper

7¼" high. 49-85

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Nichols

Above—right

**YOUNG MAN WITH A FALCON**

Persian, about 1520

Color on paper, album leaf. 9" x 5½". 43-6/1

Left

**BUCKLE**

Persian, Safavid Dynasty, dated 1612 (1021 A.H.)

Steel, inlaid with gold. 3¾" x 2¾". 34-223





Above

### CARPET, KASHAN

Persian, about 1600

Silk tapestry with gold and silver threads. 7' 11½" x 5' 11½". 32-70

The magnificence of this silk tapestry rug woven with gold and silver thread identifies it with productions from royal manufactories. A large quatrefoil medallion dominates the center on a gold ground ornamented with floral arabesques and a pair of leopards attacking a deer, all designed in soft and brilliant colors. The golden field is framed at each corner with a large half-palmette design, and the entire central portion is enclosed within a wide border composed of compartments irregularly outlined by palmette motifs. Each metal thread is spirally wrapped around a silk thread of similar color, leaving enough of the silk uncovered so that the sumptuous effect of both silk and metal threads is revealed.

Below

### CARPET, so-called "POLONAISE"

Persian, 1st half of 17th century

Woven and tied with the Sehna knot in silk, gold, and silver threads. 13' 9" x 6'. 33-460

The term "Polonaise" has been given to a group of luxurious carpets woven with silk, gold, and silver threads for the court of Shah Abbas I (1587-1629). Since rugs of this type were first known in Europe from the Prince Czartoryski collection in Poland, it was wrongly supposed for many years that these carpets were produced in a Polish factory. This exquisite carpet, formerly in the Abruzzi collection in Florence, is one of the largest and most elegant. The formalized floral pattern is woven with twenty soft colors of silk, and the effect of brilliance is achieved by an overlay of threads of silver and gold.





# General Information

## HOURS OF OPENING

Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, 2:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Closed: Every Monday, New Year's Day, Fourth of July,  
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## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Free conducted tours of the Gallery are provided Tuesday through Saturday at 10, 11, 12 and 2 o'clock and on Sunday at 2, 2:30, 3:00, and 3:30 P.M. Special tours for groups may be arranged in advance through the Education Department. Volunteer service is given by members of the Friends of Art; the Junior League of Kansas City, Missouri; the Junior League of Kansas City, Kansas; the Young Matrons; and the Independence Service League. Throughout the year classes and workshops are offered to children and adults in various media. The Childrens' Library hours during the school year are 10-4 on Saturdays, 2-5 on Sundays. Summer hours are from 10-4 Tuesday through Friday.

## LIBRARY

The Kenneth and Helen Spencer Art Reference Library, located in the southwest corner of the ground floor, is open to the public Monday through Friday, from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. The Library houses approximately 25,000 volumes pertaining to objects in the museum's collection and general art history. Although the books are non-circulating, they may be used in the Library.

## SOCIETY OF FELLOWS

The Society of Fellows is an organization of Corporate, Sustaining, and Individual donors whose annual contributions to the Nelson Gallery Foundation provide major support for the loan exhibitions, education programs, research library, publicity, and maintenance of the Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum. Members receive invitations to special previews and lectures, copies of Gallery publications, and outstanding travel opportunities.

## FRIENDS OF ART

Membership in the Friends of Art is open to the public. This multi-purpose not-for-profit organization serves the Gallery by providing volunteer and financial support through many channels, as well as contributing modern and contemporary works of art to the Gallery. Members enjoy such benefits as free lecture series, free Gallery admission, discounts on publications, invitations to special Gallery events, and free subscription to the monthly Gallery Calendar. Information regarding membership and dues may be obtained from the Friends of Art office at the Gallery.

## SALES AND RENTAL GALLERY

Located on the South Mezzanine, the Sales and Rental Gallery is operated by volunteers who are members of the Friends of Art. This non-profit service provides to the community, paintings, sculpture, prints, drawings, and ceramics, chiefly from local regional artists, that may be borrowed or purchased. To further encourage collecting in Kansas City, the Sales and Rental Gallery organizes a number of special sales exhibitions each year comprised of objects, antique or modern, selected from sources in the United States and abroad. Thus original art objects of quality are made continuously and conveniently available to the people of Kansas City.

## COFFEE LOUNGE

The Coffee Lounge on the North Mezzanine, also staffed by Friends of Art volunteers, provides a pleasant area where Gallery visitors may pause for rest and refreshment. Beverages, snacks, and light lunches are served from 10:00 A.M. to 3:45 P.M., Tuesday through Saturday, and on Sunday from 2:00 to 5:00. By prior appointment, organizations may arrange for group luncheons to be catered by the Coffee Lounge.

## SALES DESK

The Sales Desk at the North entrance has available a wide variety of publications and reproductions relating to the fine arts, including slides, postcards, catalogues, books, color prints, jewelry, and sculpture. All the color plates in this Handbook may be purchased as separate prints; black and white photographs of all objects illustrated and of others in the collections may also be obtained through the Sales Desk.



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